THE TRIADIC HEART OF ŚIVA



KAULA TANTRICISM OF ABHINAVAGUPTA IN THE NON-DUAL SHAIVISM OF KASHMIR

PAUL EDUARDO MULLER-ORTEGA

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The SUNY Series in the Shaiva Traditions of Kashmir

Harvey P. Alper, Editor

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in memory of Eduardo Ortega y Gasset
my first *guru*, and in his own way, a great *siddha*

Contents

List of Abbreviations

Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-kārikā	*ĪPK*
Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī	*ĪPv*
Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī	*ĪPvv*
Mahārtha-mañjarī	*MM*
Mālinī-vijaya-tantra	*MVT*
Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika	*MVv*
Netra-tantra	*NT*
Parā-praveśikā	*PP*
Parātrīśikā-laghuvṛtti	*PTlv*
Parātriṃśikā-vivaraṇa	*PTv*
Rudra-yāmala-tantra	*RYT*
Siddha-yogeśvarī-mata-tantra	*SYT*

Śiva-sūtra-vimarśinī	*ŚSv*
Spanda-kārikā	*SpK*
Tantrāloka	*TĀ*
Tantrasāra	*TS*
Vijñāna-bhairava-tantra	*VBhT*

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Methodological Considerations

Abhinavagupta and the Heart of Śiva

The symbol of the Heart plays a central role in the tantric writings of Abhinavagupta. As the French scholar Lilian Silburn has said about the Heart,

> La position des śivaïtes kaśmiriens à l'égard du yoga et de jñāna ne se comprend bien que par rapport aux trois énergies du triangle du coeur (*trikoṇa* et *triśūla*) et dans la perspective des trois voies qui en découlent. Toute la manifestation évolue à partir de ce triangle comme un flot frémissant et pur du Coeur divin et c'est aussi, par le frémissement de son propre coeur, que l'homme retrouve le centre du *trikoṇa*, en prenant conscience de soi.[1]

This succinct statement by one of the eminent scholars of the non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir sets forth the theme of this book.[2] We wish to understand what Abhinavagupta means by the Heart. In the process of unpacking the meanings that are condensed in the symbol of the Heart, we will gain access to the central religious vision of the great Kashmiri teacher.

Although the writings of Abhinavagupta are lengthy and complex, running through them all is a stance on reality that is derived from his own enlightenment experiences and training under his *guru*, Śambhunātha.[3] This stance, or approach to reality, is so influential and pervasive in Abhinavagupta's writings that it may be called his central religious vision. It is the Heart which functions as one of the primary and unifying symbols

of this religious vision. By examining the symbol of the Heart, access is gained to a key entry point into this central religious vision.

Abhinavagupta's religious vision is intimately bound up with the symbol of the Heart on three important levels. The first is the reality of the Heart as Śiva, which refers to the ultimacy and transcendence of Śiva in the Heart. The key term here is *anuttara-tattva*, that is, the principle of the Ultimate. The second level involves Abhinavagupta's teachings about the methods and techniques that must be employed in order to approach the Ultimate reality of the Heart and transform it into a living human reality. The most direct and effortless method of realization is known as the *Śāmbhavopāya*.[4] The third level intimates the nature of the state of realization of the Heart. This process of realization is termed *hṛdayaṅgamībhūta*, which literally means "become something that moves in the Heart," and can be more simply translated as "experiential replication." The state of realization is often called *Bhairavatā*—the condition of Bhairava.[5] Thus, the overall structure of this study will follow these three 'levels' of the Heart: Ultimate reality, method, and realization.

In the attempt to understand the Heart, our understanding of Abhinavagupta's central religious vision will be enhanced. However, this search for understanding holds both promise and problems. We are liable to misunderstand Abhinavagupta as long as our penetration into his thought is incomplete. Indeed, Abhinavagupta defines error as incomplete knowledge (*apūrṇakhyāti*).[6] The promise is that Abhinavagupta's thought will so engage us that we will persist in our study. Yet it must be recognized that claims to complete understanding are foolhardy, for deciphering the work of Abhinavagupta, like understanding any great thinker, is an enormous task, and ultimately must be a collective enterprise. Therefore we can engage in an initial foray, an exploratory journey, impelled by the promise of the enormous riches of the profundity of the Shaiva vision of reality.

Can we hope completely to understand Abhinavagupta? We must be fully aware that for every element of his thought we study, many more remain to be discussed before we can claim a true understanding of this great teacher and the tradition from which he stems.

We immediately encounter an important and central cross-cultural perplexity. We have been using the term *understand* in its commonly accepted denotation: to have a thorough technical acquaintance with something. The term may be used in a stronger sense: Abhinavagupta distinguishes between an understanding that is purely intellectual, and one gained from experiential knowledge.[7] There is an important sense in which to understand the Heart actually requires replicating the journey of return that is the tantric *sādhanā:* we must play Śiva's game to its most

serious and hilarious conclusion, which is the unmasking of Śiva within ourselves.

A scholarly study, however, cannot insist on such a radical form of understanding. As a consequence we must here limit the notion of understanding to a form of sympathetic perception through which we attempt to see and feel our way into the still alien universe of tantric *sādhanā*. However, this limitation of understanding necessarily obscures the most important meaning of the Heart of Abhinavagupta: that a religious vision is not something simply intellectual, emotional, or imagined, but rather it is a pulsating, powerful experience that completely transforms our ordinary and routinized perceptions of reality.

Nevertheless, a scholarly study can contribute something to the collective task of interpreting and understanding the work of Abhinavagupta. In addition, it may embolden a few readers to the existential task of experiential replication. This emphasis on the importance of the experiential dimension is, of course, not unique to Abhinavagupta. It is a theme that is sounded in perhaps every Indian religious environment as far back as the *Veda* and the Vedic *soma*.[8] Certainly, Abhinavagupta was entirely committed to the awakening knowledge of *sādhanā*.[9] He taught from a level of complete spiritual awakening with the authority of one who was considered a Śiva incarnate.[10] In the opening verses of what is perhaps his most complex work, the *Parātriṃśikā-vivaraṇa*,[11] he clearly states that his purpose in composing the work is the fulfillment of his religious duty to awaken his disciples. As a result, it would constitute a grave error to approach his writings on the tantric *sādhanā* as if they were intellectual exercises or an abstract theology rather than symbolic transcriptions of powerful religious experiences. Abhinavagupta was not just an arranger or systematizer of a received tradition, although he was very talented at these tasks. His writings on the tantric *sādhanā* hold the vibrant power of radically transformative teachings which are designed to be passed on to disciples so that they too may come to awakening. In this context, Abhinavagupta stands as the enlightened *guru* treating with utmost seriousness and clarity the theoretical bases and essential techniques that bring a person to the highest possible experiential realizations.

Often, various life sketches of Abhinavagupta place great emphasis on his many different teachers.[12] The rigorous and encyclopedic training he received from them undoubtedly accounts for the refined precision and informed character of his writings. Certainly Abhinavagupta's was a universal intellect which encompassed the major disciplines of his time. However, scholars have placed less emphasis on Abhinavagupta's tantric initiation and subsequent awakening at the feet of one teacher: Śrī Śambhunātha. This teacher brought Abhinavagupta to a realization and vision

which transcended the intellect; and in order to understand Abhinavagupta's usage of the symbol of the Heart, this vision is of utmost importance. Abhinavagupta's disquisitions on the Heart must be read as transcriptions into language of the awakening he received from Śambhunātha. They form the living, experiential core of an enlightened teaching about the Tantra. At the same time, Abhinavagupta's precise and informed intellect frames this core in a systematic rendering. It is this impressive accomplishment that makes his writings worthy of sustained scrutiny and investigation.

Overall Structure and Purpose of the Book

The purpose of this book is to examine the symbol of the Heart of Śiva as it is taught in the writings of the tenth-century Kashmiri teacher, Abhinavagupta. As a potent and numinous symbol, the Heart of Śiva draws us to the center of an enormous web of meaning which reflects the religious vision of Abhinavagupta. Abhinavagupta employs the symbol of the Heart as part of a system, school, or method which he termed Kaula, or more generally, and with a wider reference, Tantra. These terms will receive sustained scrutiny later on.[13] For now, suffice it to say that in order to enter into an examination of the Heart, we must also explore the wider context of the tantric preceptorial line known as the Kaula lineage. It is precisely in those portions of Abhinavagupta's writings that we may term Kaula that we find the Heart appearing most frequently as a symbol for the Ultimate. It is in this lineage that Abhinavagupta claims to have been enlightened.

It is interesting that most descriptions of the Kaula line refer to it as a school devoted almost exclusively to radical spiritual practices and to meditation methods, and with little or no metaphysical or doctrinal speculations of its own.[14] There can be little doubt that this tradition stressed direct experience and "appropriation" (*svīkartavya*) over the more speculative activities of system-building and doctrinal argumentation. Nevertheless, practices as complex and as powerful as those utilized by the Kaulas neither develop nor are applied in a conceptual void. By deciphering the symbol of the Heart and attempting to read the meanings condensed in it, we will gain access to the conceptual matrix that surrounds the practices and methods of the Kaula lineage. In doing so we will encounter one of the earliest, most explicit, and sophisticated theoretical formulations of the processes of Hindu tantric Yoga.

We might call this study an investigation of Abhinavagupta's theology of the Heart. Yet we must exercise caution with the term *theology*. In his study of Śiva as *prakāśa* Alper comments:

> I find it clearer . . . to use the phrase 'Śaivite theology' more narrowly to mean the systematic articulation of the Śaivite viewpoint in accordance with standards common to Indian philosophizing in general and the defense of that viewpoint with arguments designed to demonstrate its superiority to various alternatives. Śaivism becomes an object of sustained and critical reflection in that sense at a comparatively late date.[15]

It is apparent from this particular usage of the phrase "Śaivite theology" that Alper reserves the term for those portions of Abhinavagupta's opus which we can more generally characterize as philosophical, that is, the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* (*ĪPv*) and the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī* (*ĪPvv*).[16] In these works, doctrinal schemes are systematically expounded and defended in the accepted *darśana* or *śāstra* style.

In this same context Alper also reflects Ninian Smart's observations on the relationship in Indian philosophy between religious experience and metaphysics.[17]

> I am influenced . . . by the observation of Ninian Smart that metaphysical assertions are often disguised spiritual claims, and that therefore one may not understand a doctrinal scheme without attending to the sometimes complex 'religious activities which give [it] life and point.[18]

Smart puts the matter more directly:

> It involves too the assumption that the determination of metaphysics by forms of religious experience and practice occurs that way round and not conversely . . . it would be indeed odd if metaphysics, considered as sets of propositions to be entertained and believed by people, should have the enormous effect of creating out of nothing the powerful religious experiences of both great teachers and ordinary folk.[19]

This study does not limit itself to an examination of "Śaivite theology" in the narrow sense that Alper gives to it. If, with Alper, we are convinced that "Abhinava's theology is an organic expression of the Śaiva spirit, *rooted in a precise, specifiable set of religious experiences*,"[20] then our concern is with an examination of the "roots" of "Śaivite theology." We are looking for the environments where those religious experiences occurred, insofar as their descriptions can be reconstructed through the texts. There is a sense in which the tantric environments of Abhinavagupta's work are thus logically prior to the theology. Thus our search leads to the pre-theological, practical-experiential contexts which are precisely the tantric, Kaula portions of his writings.

There are references to the Heart and Kaula environments scattered

throughout Abhinavagupta's writings. There is one text, however, that is given over in its entirety to the symbol of the Heart. It is perhaps one of the most important expositions of the inner meanings of the Kaula lineage in the corpus of Abhinavagupta's extant writings. The text is the *Parātrīśikā-laghuvṛtti* (*PTlv*), also known as the *Anuttara-tattva-vimarśinī*. It is a medium length commentary on thirty-six *āgamic* verses which purport to form the last part of the *Rudra-yāmala-tantra*.[21] For the purposes of this study, the *PTlv* forms the primary textual support.[22] These *āgamic* verses and Abhinavagupta's commentary on them focus on a particular dimension of religious experience: the attainment of liberation through the experience of the Heart. In discussing *āgama*-s in general terms, the Dutch scholar Jan Gonda states:

> Although they do contain what might be called philosophical and theological analyses . . . they do not require systematic interpretation in the light of a traditional philosophical system . . . . Their philosophical interest is limited. For their authors the attainment of the highest goal is much more essential than metaphysical speculation.[23]

While this statement is generally correct, it is readily apparent, given what has been said above, that *āgamic* texts are exceedingly relevant to an understanding of theological and philosophical environments.

Of course, it is also necessary to consult relevant passages in several of Abhinavagupta's other writings, works by his close disciple and interpreter, Kṣemarāja, as well as other texts of the earlier non-dual Kashmir Shaiva traditions.[24] Of Abhinavagupta's writings on the Tantra, his massive and encyclopedic work, the *Tantrāloka*, contains three revealing chapters that are almost exclusively devoted to the Kaula lineage.[25] Also relevant are portions of the *Parātriṃśikā-vivaraṇa* (*PTv*), the *Tantrasāra* (*TS*), the *Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika* (*MVv*), and the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* (*ĪPv*). Brief passages in Kṣemarāja's *Śiva-sūtra-vimarśinī* (*ŚSv*) and *Parā-praveśikā* are also revealing.

The task of translation could be extended indefinitely. The riches of the *TĀ* and the *PTv* are enormous and still await further exploration. For the present, a close examination of the *PTlv* illuminates the most concentrated Heart environment in Abhinavagupta's writings and fixes the bounds of the study within manageable limits. It must be emphasized, however, that this is a study of a symbol, the Heart. While the symbol presents inexhaustible depths of investigation, it also provides the main focus and boundaries of the study. This volume does not purport to present an exhaustive study of the *PTlv*, although an examination of the Heart in fact generates analysis of a great deal of the text. Nor can this be a

complete treatment of the Kaula lineage; though again, in examining the Heart, we open up for study its central conceptual matrix.

On a more general level, the book attempts an interpretation of the functioning within the non-dual Kashmiri Shaiva traditions of the relationship between a religious symbol and the domains of religious practice and religious experience. This task requires that we examine the Heart of Śiva as a symbol of Ultimate reality, while remaining alert to the experiential dimension of the Heart which is attained by a series of powerful methods and practices. This investigation will reveal the central theoretical framework on which the Shaiva religio-mystical praxis is based. While, as we shall see, the tradition presents us with a bewildering mass of details and specificities, many of which remain to be sorted out, the outlines of the underlying theoretical structure that emerge from this mass are of an admirably elegant simplicity—which is very different from saying that they are easy to understand!

The remainder of the first chapter will treat some general methodological considerations drawn from what scholars have to say about symbolism and the study of symbols in the history of religions, and will proceed to examine some of the limitations and difficulties of any study of this nature. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a review of some of the scholarly contributions on the non-dual Kashmiri Shaivas.

In the second chapter, historical analysis will reveal three concentric circles. The first circle situates the non-dual Kashmiri Shaivas in the larger sphere of Indian religiosity. We shall see that this tradition occurs at the intersection of the Tantra and Shaiva traditions. An outline of trends in Shaivism, as they precede the developments in Kashmir, will be followed by the very important tantric components of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. Consequently, this chapter begins by offering some general comments on the nature of the Hindu Tantra, a phenomenon which is rather difficult to circumscribe. We shall then sketch out the specific tantric lineage in question, the Kaula lineage: its literature and the main components of its practices and teachings. The second concentric circle will then detail the little we know about the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva traditions themselves, especially that portion of the tradition that precedes Abhinavagupta. It will be clear that the historical currents that lead up to Abhinavagupta are by no means easy to delineate. The final circle offers an examination of the life and extant works of Abhinavagupta. This chapter also contains references to many of the important terms, doctrines, teachings, and arguments that are necessary to understand the Heart. Of course, one could write an entire book on the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva "philosophy." Our considerations here are necessarily limited by the purpose of understanding the Heart to what we might term the explanatory

framework. In fact, many of these terms and doctrines have been only superficially examined by scholars and pose important interpretive problems of their own: Śiva, *śakti*, consciousness (*saṃvid*), freedom (*svātantrya*), the thirty six *tattva*-s, the three *upāya*-s, *mantra*, and *jīvan-mukti*.

In the third chapter we will examine the symbol of the Heart in India prior to Abhinavagupta. We will look at descriptions of the reality of the Heart as they occur in the *Veda*, in the *Upaniṣad*-s, and in various Yoga texts. We shall then examine the Heart as it occurs in some of the early Shaiva texts of Kashmir.

Chapters 4 through 9 form the main body of the work. These chapters contain a look at the reality of the Heart, the methods that lead to the Heart and the nature of the realization of the Heart. The approach will be primarily conceptual, that is, terminological and textual. Given the perspective in which Śiva is the only reality, many of the terms represent aspects of Śiva's being. Each term does not have a totally different entity as an ultimate referent. The purpose of the variety of terms seems to be to emphasize specific aspects, and to allow for different nuances, different moments of the experience of Śiva, of the ways in which Śiva comes to 'recognize' himself, on the multi-levelled journey of Śiva's return to himself. All of these terms can be seen as being interrelated in an enormous web. They are all linked, like chain in chain mail.[26] While it is tempting to try to explicate all possible links between the terms, the task would be infinite: every new explication uncovers new links which must themselves be explicated. We shall have to be content with tracing a few of the major lines of relationship between the terms, to place them in their proper context, and to indicate the general outlines of the possible interrelationships. This study will look in depth at these areas of the 'web': in Chapter 4, we will consider the term *hṛdaya*, Heart, and the related term *anuttara*, Ultimate, including the prevalence of notions about light, *prakāśa*, and the self-referential nature of consciousness, *vimarśa*, as well as the Heart as 'center', *madhya*. In Chapter 5, we turn to the term *kula*, 'group', and the related ideas about triangularity, sexuality, and the divine pair, *Śiva-śakti saṃghaṭṭa*. In Chapter 6, we examine the notion of *spanda*, the concept of *visarga*, 'emission', and ideas concerning 'vibration', 'sounding', and expansion and contraction. In Chapter 7, a series of related notions about the Heart will be scrutinized. These might be termed natural metaphors for the Heart: the term *khecarī*, 'moving-in-the-void', and images of the Heart as a sky, abyss, and ocean, the *soma*-moon connection along with the ideas about fire and sun, and the Heart as lotus, *padma*. In Chapter 8, we will focus on the Heart as *mantra*, especially the central *mantra SAUḤ*. The examination of the notions of *visarga* and *mantra* will lead us to the methods that produce enlightenment by relying not

on individual effort, but rather on the awakening and channelling of the power of consciousness itself. Meditation, the tool par excellence, is shown not to involve a forcible control over the mind, but an immersion, a sinking, a repose, which allows the subtle currents already operative in the mind to channel it in the direction of the *anuttara.* Finally, in Chapter 9 we will conclude with a consideration of the Heart as unitive realization, the goal of the tantric practitioner, including a look at the notions of the levels of bliss, the connection to *prāṇa*, and the ultimate experience of the universal bliss, *jagadānanda.* We will conclude with a brief look at the redefinition of the nature of enlightenment proposed by the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas and, more especially, by Abhinavagupta. The key element of this redefinition is that the strictly inward nature of ultimate enlightenment has appended to it an open-eyed state where every object is seen as ultimately formed of consciousness itself. This unitive vision of outward reality erases the polarities between inner and outer, between life and death. It also allows the *jīvanmukta* to become an embodied, powerful *siddha*, who possesses not just an ultimate vision, but is empowered by that vision to act and create as Śiva himself.[27] This new definition of the goal of spiritual life becomes one of the hallmarks of the later tantric tradition.[28]

Approaches to a Symbol: Symbol and Religious Vision

The symbol of the Heart is a key entry point into the "pretheological" portions of Abhinavagupta's writings. We should look briefly at the notion of a symbol, and what we understand to be the process of interpretation of a symbol.

There is little doubt that much of what we do in religious studies can be subsumed under the category of symbolic analysis. Ninian Smart tells us, "We can see that an essential ingredient of the modern study of religion is 'symbolic analysis'."[29] Similarly, Mircea Eliade comments, "One could say then, that all research undertaken on a religious subject implies the study of religious symbolism."[30]

Whether it be interpreting a text, a ritual, a myth, a sacred dance, or a piece of sculpture, we are involved in an attempt to derive meanings from various sorts of symbols. Scholars argue about exactly what is involved in this process of interpretation and what the methods involved in such interpretation should be. In spelling out the approach for this study, it is appropriate at this point to look at some of the statements scholars have made on the nature of symbols and their interpretation.

A good place to begin is with Suzanne Langer's definition of a symbol in her important study, *Philosophy in a New Key:*

> Symbols are not proxy for their objects, but are vehicles for the conception of objects. In talking about things we have conceptions of them, not the things themselves; and it is the conceptions, not the things, that symbols directly mean.[31] Wherever a symbol operates, there is a meaning; and conversely different classes of experience—say, reason, intuition, appreciation correspond to different types of symbolic mediation.[32]

Langer distinguishes three types of symbols: discursive symbols, presentational symbols and artistic symbols. Discursive symbols are used in spoken and written language and as such have a vocabulary, a syntax, and the possibility of translation of one discursive symbol in terms of others. Presentational symbols, such as pictures, are wordless "presentations" of meaning. They are nondiscursive and untranslatable. A presentational symbol cannot be defined within its own system. It cannot directly convey generalities.[33]

Finally, Langer tells us:

> An artistic symbol—which may be a product of human craftsmanship, or (on a purely personal level) something in nature seen as a 'significant form'—has more than discursive and presentational meaning: its form as such, as a sensory phenomenon, has what I have called 'implicit' meaning, like rite and myth, but of a more catholic sort. It has what L. A. Reid called 'tertiary subject matter,' beyond the reach of 'primary imagination' and even the 'secondary imagination' that sees metaphorically. 'Tertiary subject-matter' is subject-matter imaginatively experienced *in* the work of art . . . , something which cannot be apprehended apart from the work, though theoretically distinguishable from its expressiveness.[34]

Langer's is, of course, just one of many approaches to the nature of symbols. However, in view of her general analysis of symbols, we might ask about the nature of the specific religious symbol involved in this study, the Heart. Where does it fit into this analysis? Certainly the Heart, as a word that occurs in a text, is a discursive symbol. It is also, quite clearly, more than just a discursive symbol. We can see this when we ask: what is the meaning of the Heart, in what sense is it a 'vehicle'? In answering this question, we become aware of the many levels of meaning that are conveyed by the religious symbol. It is not easy to say directly what the religious symbol means, because we sense in it a density, a compression of meaning, which is precisely what contributes to its power. The Heart as it appears in the Shaiva texts is surely a more "powerful" discursive symbol than the word *table*, which we encounter in ordinary conversation. As with the artistic symbol, we sense in it deeper levels of meaning, some of which may be translated into other discursive symbols. Much of the power of

the religious symbol seems to resonate nondiscursively and untranslatably in the numinosity of the symbol. What other insights does modern scholarship offer?

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz clearly relies on Langer's notion of a symbol in his discussions of culture.[35] Geertz defines culture in terms of symbolism.

> The term culture denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life.[36]

Geertz continues:

> Sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos—the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood—and their world view—the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order.[37]

Geertz then characterizes "systems or complexes of symbols" as "extrinsic sources of information" because

> they lie outside the boundaries of the individual organism as such in that intersubjective world of common understandings into which all human individuals are born . . .[38]

and because " . . . they provide a blueprint or template in terms of which processes external to themselves can be given a definite form."[39] Geertz elucidates the important distinction between the sense in which symbols are models *for* and models *of:*

> Unlike genes, and other non-symbolic information sources, which are only models *for*, not models *of*, culture patterns (i.e. systems or complexes of symbols) have an intrinsic double aspect: they give meaning, i.e., objective conceptual form, to social and psychological reality both by shaping themselves to it and by shaping it to themselves.[40]

This study will show that the Heart functions clearly as both a model of Ultimate reality and a model for the attainment of that Ultimate reality.

Larson has pointed out that for the specific case of the interpretation of religious symbols, Geertz's discussion is made more relevant by Ricoeur. As Larson puts it,

> Paul Ricoeur supplements Geertz's discussion when he points out . . . that "symbols" (especially religious symbols) tend always to have a "double intentionality," that is to say, a "first level" obvious and literal signification as well as a "second level" indirect and oblique signification which is "opaque," "analogical," and characterized by an "inexhaustible depth." The interpretation of a symbol or complex of symbols is, thus, never simply an exercise in translation, difficult as that is. Interpretation, rather, is an attempt to understand and give expression to the "transparency of an enigma" which any symbol or symbol-complex represents.[41]

Given this "double intentionality" of religious symbols, the process of interpretation is a complex one. What is most interesting to evoke is the second level of the symbol, its indirect and oblique signification. This is what gives the religious meaning its power and efficacy. Of course, this oblique level presents the greatest difficulties of interpretation.

What of Abhinavagupta's own analysis of meaning in poetic language? Agreeing with Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta accepts three levels of meaning.[42] He tells us that a word may have three levels of signification:

1. *abhidhā*—conventional meaning
2. *lakṣaṇā*—secondary meaning
3. *vyañjanā*—suggestive meaning or resonance.

The term *hṛdaya*, the Heart, is, using Langer's terminology, a discursive symbol. In its conventional and secondary meanings, *hṛdaya* refers to our conceptions of the physical organ and essence respectively. These meanings correspond to Ricoeur's first level of signification. The second level, then, corresponds to the notion of resonance. It is this resonance—opaque, analogical, and of inexhaustible depth—that constitutes the power and potency of the religious symbol.[43] In addition, this resonance of some religious symbols seems to be the way in which individual symbols are able to contain, through 'compression' or 'condensation', the entire religious teaching of the environment in which they are revered. This may be termed the 'totalizing', or perhaps following Geertz, the 'synthesizing' function of the symbol. In this function, the religious symbol, though only one word of the larger language of which it is a member, has the peculiar property of being linked to, and in some sense containing within it, every other word of the language.

The historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, has written extensively on the process of interpretation of religious symbols. Several recent studies underscore the importance of the Indian tradition, especially of Tantrism in understanding Eliade's vision. In his study on Eliade, Guilford Dudley notes:

> Thomas Altizer has argued that Eliade's archaic ontology remains essentially Indian in its orientation. Specifically Altizer suggests that the principle of unity behind the sacred rests on a "pre-temporal and pre-cosmic totality" to which the "coincidentia oppositorum" points in its Hindu, and specifically Tantric form.[44]

In studying Abhinavagupta we are entering a peculiarly "Eliadean" universe, in which Eliade's insights and interpretations seem peculiarly apt and well suited.

Eliade summarizes his position on religious symbolism by suggesting that

> religious symbols are capable of revealing a modality of the real or a structure of the World that is not evident on the level of immediate experience . . . . An essential characteristic of religious symbolism is its multivalence, its capacity to express simultaneously a number of meanings whose continuity is not evident on the plane of immediate experience . . . . This capacity of religious symbolism to reveal a multitude of structurally coherent meanings has an important consequence. The symbol is thus able to reveal a perspective in which heterogeneous realities are susceptible of articulation into a whole or even into a "system".[45]

In another important study Eliade emphasizes that various symbols come to form an "autonomous system";[46] they " . . . make up a symbolic system which in a sense pre-existed them all. We are therefore . . . justified in speaking of a 'logic of symbols'."[47] He continues, "From this point of view symbolism appears to be a 'language' understood by all members of a community and meaningless to outsiders."[48]

Finally, Eliade alerts us to a process which he terms the "imperialism" of certain symbols:

> The "imperialism" of the victorious religious forms is also explainable by this tendency of every hierophany or theophany to become *everything*—that is, to sum up in itself all manifestations of the holy, to incorporate all the immense morphology of the sacred.[49]

In our study of the Heart we will watch the unfolding of the "system of meaning" and "language" of the symbol. These scholarly insights and observations can help us, in the remaining chapters of this study, to explore the symbol of the Heart.

Limitations and Difficulties

Many of this study's limitations in scope have already been alluded to. Beyond the sheer richness of the tradition there are various limitations

and difficulties that face any investigator of these materials, and it may be useful to call attention to some of these. Perhaps the most important difficulty, for which there is no easy solution, is that the Kaula, and more generally the tantric aspects of Abhinavagupta's thought, form an undeniably esoteric tradition. This attribute of esotericism means more than that the teachings are difficult, and even at times obscure, which sometimes they are. In order to interpret the tradition properly, and not be taken in by some misleading surface meaning which has been deliberately introduced to exclude meddling souls, ideally one would have to be initiated into the tradition. However, even if it were possible to receive such an initiation, one could not really be certain that the meanings and interpretations derived from the initiation would correspond to the tradition as it was in the tenth century.

Moreover, as we shall see, the Kaula teachings are not so much a philosophy as they are a method for the attainment of enlightenment experiences. While one might wish to garner from initiation some insights to assist in deciphering difficult points of doctrine and obscure technical terms, in fact, the esotericism of the tradition does not actually lie so much with doctrine. Instead, the tradition's esoteric nature relates to its discussion and description of nonordinary states of reality. Thus it is not appropriate to approach Abhinavagupta's tantric formulations as one would approach a rational system. Rather, in approaching the tradition, we will encounter an intuitional and symbolic method that is the direct outgrowth of the phenomenology of tantric meditation.

This study's contention is that it is only through symbols that Abhinavagupta is able to convey in language the content of the enlightenment experiences. Thus the tradition is esoteric in large measure because ultimately it is necessary to undergo the process of experiential replication before the symbols will speak to us completely. Abhinavagupta makes this precise point in stating that only when the lotus of the Heart has been opened by the "descent of energy" will the truth be revealed.[50] Not even the most acute reasoning powers in the world could produce this revelation. Once the Heart has been "opened," continues Abhinavagupta, discursive thought can penetrate ever more closely to the Ultimate.[51]

In addition to this rather formidable obstacle which interpreters of non-dual Kashmiri Shaivism as well as of other meditation traditions must face, we must deal with the simple fact that Abhinavagupta, by his own admission, does not tell all. At several points in his texts there is the frustrating statement that the subject matter under discussion is highly secret, and that too much has already been said. The discussion of that topic then breaks off.[52] In the *TĀ*, while discussing a controversial theory about purity, Abhinavagupta states that ancient enlightened sages kept

it secret in order not to perturb the established order of the world.[53] Statements of this kind lead to fruitless, yet tantalizing, speculation as to how many secrets were not recorded in the texts and were imparted only orally to select disciples.

The great fluidity of the teaching is apparent in the texts. The teachings of the Kaula current form an inner teaching in relation to the more formally philosophical outer teaching of, for example, the *ĪPv* and *ĪPvv*, where the concern is not so much the enlightenment of disciples as the argumentation of a Shaiva viewpoint vis-à-vis other Indian *darśana*-s. As a consequence, in more tantric materials, there is not so much sustained and rigorous argumentation as there is authoritative exposition which allows itself a kind of descriptive adaptability. The point is to enlighten disciples, and different and apparently contradictory versions of the same teachings do occur. Abhinavagupta learned well from the Buddhists' notions of "excellence in the choice of means"[54] and the "emptiness" or "instrumental" character of language. In the Kaula tradition there is a basic tendency to be suspicious of language. Conventional language is, after all, one of the building blocks of bondage. *Vikalpa* (verbalization) constitutes by definition the wavering, polarized state of the bound and finite person disenfranchised and separated from his powerful source. Language, however, can also be used to free a person from bondage. In this usage, language is primarily an explanatory inducement towards the liberating experience. Perhaps even more importantly, it constitutes part of the practice, in the form of "unconventional"[55] mantric language, which leads to the *avikalpa* transcendence of both duality and language itself, and involves the entrance into silence. Insofar as all philosophical structures and speculative systems are constructions of a dual, descriptive language, they must be abandoned for the *siddha* to dwell in the immediate perception of non-dual reality.

All of this is to say that Abhinavagupta is a master in his use of language. In fact, he does not despise the intellect, and his powers of argumentation are impressive. Nevertheless, he often refers to consciousness as the "shadow of one's own hat." The more we try to step on the shadow by moving towards it, the more it eludes us.[56] So too, ultimate reality cannot be circumscribed in words. It is a reality that is prior to all descriptions and to all arguments.

In addition to these rather formidable difficulties inherent in interpreting the tradition itself, there are several other obstacles. These have more to do with the current lack of accessories and aids to the study of these traditions. Many of the primary texts of the tradition have been published in Sanskrit, but these editions have not been critically edited.[57] Consequently, these Sanskrit texts are full of doubtful readings, mistakes,

and transcription errors. Where other manuscripts of the same texts are available, it is possible for the scholar to attempt to collate a version of the text. Such, for example, has been one of the great contributions of Raniero Gnoli, who has published some eight hundred emendations to the published edition of the *PTv*, a text of some three hundred pages.[58] Unfortunately, this task has not been accomplished for the major works of Abhinavagupta, much less for the other works in the tradition. Thus, the scholar must approach these published editions with a careful eye toward possible textual errors. Until the task of collecting as many manuscripts of these texts as possible and producing from them carefully and critically edited versions is carried out, large areas of uncertainty will remain with respect to the reading of these texts.

In addition, many of the crucial texts of the tradition are lost. Abhinavagupta refers to various *āgama*-s which are apparently no longer extant. Moreover, many of the texts of the tradition, including approximately half of Abhinavagupta's writings, apparently have not survived. This inestimable loss must be kept in mind, especially when making overall assessments of the nature of the tradition.

In the light of this problem, it is scarcely surprising that secondary literature on the tradition is scarce. The next section of the study will discuss the few excellent works that are available. Even among these, however, we find a dearth of introductory surveys, handbooks, or concordances of terms, and there are few attempts at a kind of overarching theoretical clarification. The bulk of the studies produced until now have been, for the most part, advanced studies of specific texts.[59]

This state of scholarship should not really be surprising. The non-dual Kashmir Shaiva traditions represent the intersection of Shaivism and Tantrism.[60] Both the history and theoretical clarification of Shaivism, as well as of Tantrism, remain to be seriously addressed. There are great lacunae in our knowledge even of the historical precedents to the Shaiva traditions of Kashmir themselves. We know very little about what happened in Kashmir from the second to the ninth centuries prior to Vasugupta and the *Śiva-sūtra*-s. These are some of the preconditions that limit and indeed mold scholarship on this tradition.

Problem of "Schools" of Kashmir Shaivism

In the notes to his penetrating article on Śiva, Alper suggests that

> there has been an unfortunate looseness in discussion of "schools," "sects," "traditions," and "movements" of Kāśmīrī Śaivism. All that is really clear is

> that there were a series of overlapping preceptorial lines, and a plentitude of spiritual techniques available to each teacher. The exact social and ideological referent of terms such as *pratyabhijñā, spanda, Āgama, krama*, and *kula*, remains to be worked out, as does the systematic relationship between these groups.[61]

This important and insightful comment serves to balance a somewhat premature tendency by scholars to speak of the "schools" or "systems" of Kashmiri Shaivism. The distinctions and dividing lines between the different Shaivite groups simply were not hard and fast.[62] For example, one has merely to examine the *TĀ* to see that Abhinavagupta freely intermixes doctrines drawn from the Krama and the Kula lineages. There seems to have been only limited adversarial argumentation between these groups, and initiates into one tradition apparently often complemented their practices with techniques drawn from other groups. Natural groupings probably occurred simply as a result of adherence to one or another teacher and his lineage. Yet the case of Abhinavagupta is particularly interesting, for he participated in one way or another in all of these Shaivite groups. Consequently, scholars of non-dual Kashmir Shaivism often have great difficulty in specifying what the particular doctrinal and practical differences might be between a text that avows its allegiance to the Krama lineage and one which declares itself as belonging to the Kaula tradition.[63]

A review of the history of the tradition shows that a Spanda group occurs as well as a Pratyabhijñā group; and we learn that Abhinavagupta was taught Kula, Krama, Mata, and Trika *darśana.* The lines of demarcation that exist between these groups are only very slowly emerging now. Alper's comment is important to save us from too rigidly concretizing these groups. While not identical, the groups bear a strong family resemblance; in many cases, the differences seem to rest on rather minor points of doctrinal emphasis or even on the preference for specific technical terms or ritual practices not favored by one of the other groups.

Throughout this book the expression *non-dual Kashmir Shaivism* has been used to denote the non-dual traditions of tantric Shaivism in Kashmir. The older designation, *Kashmir Shaivism*, plain and simple is, however, deeply problematic. It was apparently first coined as the title of J. C. Chatterji's small, pioneering monograph which appeared in 1914.[64] Since that time the phrase has been almost universally employed by scholars as if there were accepted agreement as to its meaning. Unfortunately, the expression *Kashmir Shaivism* is in fact highly ambiguous and imprecise, as has been recently pointed out by Sanderson.[65] The expression is ambiguous in at least two senses: first, there were several varieties of Shaivism in Kashmir which were deeply divided, both doctrinally and

ritually. Secondly, the teachings of Shaivism as propounded in Kashmir are not exclusive to that region. Especially, varieties of dualistic Shaivism are in no way exclusive to Kashmir. Sanderson shows that there were at least three major traditions of Shaivism in Kashmir: (1) a non-dualistic tantric tradition that includes the various lineages of the Trika, Krama and, later, the Kaula; (2) a dualistic and highly conservative tradition of the Shaiva Siddhānta; and (3) a cult of the worship of Svacchandabhairava that fell somewhere in between the two other traditions. Of these three it is the first which has been generally and imprecisely referred to as Kashmir Shaivism. The problem with abandoning this expression centers on what to substitute in its place. Sanderson refers to the Tantric Shaivism of Kashmir.[66] Padoux explains the term as follows:

> the non-dualist forms of Shaivism that flourished approximately between the ninth and thirteenth centuries in Kashmir and other parts of North India, but also elsewhere.[67]

Alper comments:

> The older, a complex congeries of movements, was centered in Kashmir. It should be noted, however, that none of the movements prominent in Kashmir called themselves, nor should they be called "Kashmir Shaivism." Systematic and philosophical reflection on the *Śaivāgamas* was highly advanced within the Shaiva traditions associated with Kashmir.[68]

From these statements, it can be seen that there remain a number of problems to be worked out before a single, convenient term for the tradition is evolved by scholars. For the present the expression non-dual Kashmir Shaivism has been chosen. While it is slightly awkward, it does have the virtue of being precise in terms of the problems we have just discussed.

Brief Review of Scholarship on Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir

K. C. Pandey, in the introduction to his massive and indispensable book on Abhinavagupta, describes the difficulties he faced as a young research scholar in Kashmir in the 1930s attempting to gain access to the manuscripts of the main texts of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. He recounts how the Kashmir government denied his requests to have access to the two main libraries where the bulk of the extant manuscripts of Abhinavagupta's works are kept. At the suggestion of his brother, Pandey looked for copies of the manuscripts in private houses in Kashmir and was successful in securing the materials he needed for his study.

This is an interesting note on the difficult beginnings of modern scholarship on this tradition—all the more so because it is due to the same Research Department of the Government of Kashmir that most scholars now have access to the majority of the texts of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. Perhaps the most significant event in Kashmir Shaiva scholarship, and certainly the event that has made the rest of modern scholarship on these traditions truly possible, has been the publication (now numbering some eighty-seven volumes) beginning in the early part of the century of the *Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies* (*KSTS*).[69] Here the scholar can find reprinted all of the important texts of the early Kashmir Shaiva tradition: *Śiva-sūtra*-s with various commentaries, the *Spanda-kārikā*-s with commentaries, as well as editions of the major religio-philosophical texts by Abhinavagupta (but not, interestingly, any of his works on aesthetics).[70]

Unfortunately, in many cases these texts appear not to have been critically edited. Often it seems that the printed text is based upon a single manuscript. Where several manuscripts are in existence, some variant readings are noted, but no systematic effort at compiling an error-free edition appears to have been made. As a result, the reading of these complex Sanskrit texts is made even more difficult by the constant suspicion that what appears to be a particularly obscure passage is in fact a misreading or a reproduction of a scribal error.

It is disturbing to realize the real neglect under which both the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition and Abhinavagupta have lain for many centuries. Perhaps the difficulty in gaining access to the texts may account for it. Perhaps, as an esoteric tradition, it was kept barely alive by a secretive oral tradition that jealously guarded its knowledge. No doubt Abhinavagupta's fame as an aesthetician and literary critic has tended to overshadow his contributions as a Shaiva mystic and philosopher. There can be little question that the tantric nature of the tradition caused it to be neglected in favor of more puritanical and publicly acceptable formulations of Hindu spirituality, such as those found in the Advaita Vedānta.

Even today, after some fifty years of research by a handful of excellent scholars both in India and in the West, Abhinavagupta's importance is only beginning to be recognized. A figure who is perhaps second in importance and influence only to the great Śaṅkarācārya is barely mentioned in the standard surveys of Indian thought.

However, there have been three important foci of scholarship on the tradition that have been publishing their results during the last half-century. Before we turn to these three groups we should mention some of the earliest studies on the Shaivas of Kashmir.

Buhler, in his "Detailed Report of a Tour in Search of Sanskrit MSS"

(1877), gives a rather sketchy and faulty account of the Kashmir Shaiva tradition.[71] Perhaps the earliest edition of a work by Abhinavagupta is of his *Locana* on Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, which was published in Bombay in 1890 by Durgaprasad Shastri, and which contains a list of other works by Abhinavagupta in the preface.[72]

The earliest known western study of a Kashmir Shaiva text is L. D. Barnett's edition and translation of Abhinavagupta's *Paramārtha-sāra*, which appeared in 1910. Despite the errors that naturally attend upon a work which was carried out in an almost complete scholarly vacuum, it is a still-useful English rendering of this short summary text by Abhinavagupta. In fact, it was not until Lilian Silburn published her translation of the text into French that any other scholar seriously considered this work.[73]

Another early, though still useful, study is J. C. Chatterji's *Kashmir Shaivaism* (1914). Chatterji's book is divided into two sections. In the first, he attempts to set forth some historical notes and speculations about the history and dates of the tradition. In the second section he presents the theory of the thirty-six *tattva*-s. He gives this second section the misleading title, "The Main Doctrines of the System."[74] The choice of words here not only implies that there is *one system* under consideration here, but that the theory of the thirty-six *tattva*-s is its main teaching.[75] In the first section of the book Chatterji propounds an early version of a theory about the *āgamic* origins of the Trika which has proved confusing to many scholars.[76]

In the following pages important studies are mentioned that have been employed in the preparation of this book. This section by no means claims to be an exhaustive bibliographical reference, for which the reader is referred to the *Handbook of Kashmir Shaivism*, which is forthcoming in this same series.[77]

In the last half century there have evolved essentially three foci of research on the tradition: India, France, and Italy. In India there are the activities of the pandits of the Research Department of the Kashmir government. Also of note is the most authentic modern representative of the tradition in Kashmir, Brahmacari Lakṣman Joo, who has inspired many students, including some westerners, to look into the tradition. Silburn lists some of Lakṣman Joo's publications that, unfortunately, are difficult to locate.[78] In addition, there is K. C. Pandey's monumental study, *Abhinavagupta*. Pandey also produced a translation of the *ĪPv*, which is helpful for gaining access to this important text. Pandey additionally published several important articles and a book, entitled *Indian Aesthetics*, which deals in part with that aspect of Abhinavagupta's thought. Another early study of the tradition is contained in S. K. Das' *Śakti or Divine Power*, the second chapter of which contains a good summary of the non-dual

Kashmiri Shaiva doctrines. Navjivan Rastogi, a student of Pandey's, has produced a study of the Krama lineage which attempts an historical reconstruction of an almost lost lineage. Rastogi has also written articles on the Pratyabhijñā, on the concept of Śiva, and on the concept of Kālī. Perhaps his most important contribution so far has been his work, with R. C. Dwivedi, in the republication of the Sanskrit text of the *TĀ* which includes a very detailed introduction as well as a number of very useful appendices.[79] R. K. Kaw and L. N. Sharma have produced interesting books focussing mainly on aspects of the Pratyabhijñā philosophy. Recently, Jaideva Singh has produced four translations which will be especially useful in introducing the general reader to the primary texts of the tradition: *Śiva-sūtra*-s (with Kṣemarāja's *Vimarśinī*), *Spanda-Kārikā*-s (with the *Spanda-nirṇaya* of Kṣemarāja), *Vijñāna-bhairava*, and the *Pratyabhijñā-hṛdayaṃ* of Kṣemarāja.[80] Both Singh and Sharma mention the aid they received in their work from the great scholar Gopinath Kaviraj, whose *Aspects of Indian Thought* contains much that is of interest to the scholar of non-dual Kashmiri Shaivism.[81] J. Rudrappa has written an introductory survey, entitled *Kashmir Shaivism*, as well as several articles. Also worth mention is Jadunath Sinha's book, *Schools of Shaivism*, which has a chapter entitled *The Pratyabhijñā School of Śaivism*. While this work contains much useful material, it must be handled with caution, due to Sinha's rather bewildering and uncritical juxtaposition of material drawn from widely different texts of the tradition. The great Sanskrit scholar V. Raghavan has published *Abhinavagupta and His Works*. He has also edited and published the *Paryanta-pañcāśikā* of Abhinavagupta, a translation of which forms the third chapter of Pandey's *Abhinavagupta*.[82]

In France, there are two scholars who have devoted decades of study and research to the tradition: Lilian Silburn and her former student, André Padoux. Silburn has published nine books over a quarter of a century. Already mentioned is her translation of the *Paramārthasāra* (1957). In 1959 she published a translation of the *Vātūlanātha Sūtra*, followed by translations of the *Vijñāna Bhairava* (1961), the *Stavacintāmaṇi* (1964), *Hymnes de Abhinavagupta* (1964), a translation of the *Mahārthamañjarī* (1968), *Hymnes aux Kālī* (1975), and a translation the *Śivasūtra et Vimarśinī de Kṣemarāja*. Recently she published *La Kuṇḍalinī ou L'énergie des profondeurs* (1986), a work that examines this notion in considerable detail.

These publications, all done with a strict attention to the Sanskrit and accompanied by long introductions and detailed notes, represent a wealth of information on the tradition. Silburn studied for many years with Brahmacari Lakṣman Joo. Silburn's writings on the practices and experiences of mysticism in the non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir strike one as being exceedingly accurate, and as imbued with the tone of the tradition itself.

Her former student, André Padoux, has published two books, *Recherches sur la Symbolique et L'Énergie de la Parole dans Certains Textes Tantriques* (1963) and *La "Parātrīśikālaghuvṛtti" de Abhinavagupta* (1975). His first book, *Recherches*, is an encyclopedic work. It is perhaps the first sustained conceptual study of the tradition that has been produced. It stands as one of the first systematic and in-depth treatments of the notion of the supreme Word, *parā vāk*. Padoux covers the subject in such depth that he also gives full vent to the wealth of variety and detail contained in the philosophical and cosmological structures of the tradition. It is a book that combines thorough scholarliness with a lively and active sympathy for the material.

In fact, *Recherches* remains not just a pioneering study of the non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir but also stands as an important contribution to the larger field of tantric studies, and, as such, deserves to be much more widely read, studied, and emulated.[83] Padoux's second book is a first translation into French of the *PTlv* and contains a series of useful notes and explanations that are indispensable to any student of that text. Padoux has also published a number of important articles on *mantraśāstra*.

In Italy, Raniero Gnoli has made important contributions to the study of non-dual Kashmir Shaivism. Gnoli has brought to bear his considerable skills as a Sanskritist, gained as a student of Giuseppe Tucci, on several of the most difficult of Abhinavagupta's works. Perhaps his greatest achievement has been his complete translation into Italian of the *Tantrāloka* (1972), which thus opens up for others this longest and most important of Abhinavagupta's writings. Gnoli has also published complete translations of the *Tantrasāra* (1960), the *PTlv* (1965), and, in his *Testi dello Scivaismo*, translations of the *Pāśupatasūtra*-s, the *Śiva-sūtra*-s, and the *Spanda-kārikā*-s with Kallaṭa's commentary. His latest contribution has been to publish a translation and critical edition of the *PTv*, a difficult and seminal text by Abhinavagupta. In addition, he has presented translations of about half of the *MVT*, which is considered by Abhinavagupta to be the most important and authoritative revealed text. He has also published translations from the *Śiva-dṛṣṭi* of Somānanda, and selections from the *Abhinava-bhāratī*, as well as numerous other important articles. As a Sanskritist, Gnoli's primary concern has been to attempt to correct and edit texts by gathering several manuscripts and checking variant readings. Thus, the present study of the *PTlv* has been aided by Gnoli's corrections and emendations of the text published as an appendix to his Italian translation. Gnoli has been less willing than Silburn or Padoux to enter into the sustained interpretive process of the tradition, although when he does do so, as for example in his article "Alcune Technique Yoga nelle Scuole Śaiva" (1956),[84] he is highly insightful. His forte seems to be to allow the

texts to speak for themselves and to allow readers their own interpretation. Gnoli favors the view that translation *is* interpretation and has seen his main task to be there.[85]

A student of Gnoli's, Raffaele Torella, has recently published a long critique of Padoux's translation of the *PTlv*. His main criticism is that Padoux has not sufficiently realized the corrupt nature of the published edition of the text, and as a result, his translation has suffered. Torella points out a number of difficult passages and presents both Padoux's "mistakes" and his own suggested readings. While the tone of Torella's "correction" of Padoux is perhaps overly strong, he does clear up several very difficult passages. Torella has promised a critical edition of this important text, and this would be welcome as a much-needed aid to further studies of the *PTlv*.[86]

In addition to these three foci of intense research on non-dual Kashmiri Shaivism, which even in the last twenty years have opened up the field to other scholars in a way that was hardly possible before, we may also note important studies by several other scholars.

Alexis Sanderson is at present the most profound investigator of the meaning and historical relationships between the various Shaiva lineages in Kashmir. In a few compact and brilliant articles he has clarified a number of historical and interpretive questions that have long puzzled scholars. His article on the Trika lineage analyzes the various historical strata referred to by this term, which only in its latest meaning refers to Abhinavagupta's syncretism or synthesis of many different lineages into a "system."[87] Mark Dyczkowski's book *The Doctrine of Vibration* provides us with a detailed analysis of the Spanda branch of the tradition.[88]

Larson has published two excellent articles on Abhinavagupta in which he makes an appeal for the necessity for sustained interpretation and inquiry into the meaning of the tradition. Alper has published an important article in which he pleads for sustained and thoroughgoing textual scrutiny and analysis. Masson and Patwardhan's *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics* presents the reader with many of the most crucial passages from several of Abhinavagupta's works on aesthetics. The great German scholar Erich Frauwallner provides an introduction to the *Pratyabhijñā* in his *Aus der Philosphie der Śivaitichen Systeme.* Another excellent study in German is Bettina Baumer's "Die Unvermittelheit der Hochsten Erfahrung bei Abhinavagupta." In France, Helene Brunner has published a summary-translation of the *Netra-tantra*, one of the most important *āgama*-s of the Kashmir Shaiva tradition.

The intent here has been to mention the important centers of non-dual Kashmir Shaiva research that have been slowly making it possible for other scholars to gain a better and more comprehensive picture of the

tradition. While there are a substantial number of works, much research remains to be done. Critical editions and translations need to be prepared; but beyond that, the material must be studied in order that it yield its meaning and enter its rightful place in the larger scheme of Indian religious history.

CHAPTER 2

The Historical Context

There is little doubt that Abhinavagupta was well versed in the traditional *darśana*-s, and that he and his predecessors were also influenced by the polemics that were prominent in Buddhist circles. The area of Kashmir traditionally was a stronghold for diverse Brahmanical and Buddhist groups.[1] Thus it is not surprising that the horizon of Abhinavagupta's "Shaiva theology" (as Alper terms it), has as important components the various "philosophies" of Vedānta, Sāṃkhya, Pātañjala Yoga, Nyāya, as well as several varieties of Buddhism, including Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra, and Mādhyamika.[2] It is in examining Abhinavagupta's "philosophical" writings, his "Shaiva theology," in the *ĪPv*, and the *ĪPvv*, that one most often encounters explicit or implicit argumentation directed at one or another of these schools. Also, much in non-dual Kashmir Shaivism is an expansion of doctrines borrowed or adapted from *darśana* or from the Buddhists. The doctrine of the thirty-six *tattva-s* was inherited by the tradition from earlier formulations and represents an ingenious reworking of the twenty-five *tattva*-s of the Sāṃkhya. It adds an overarching cosmic dimension of Śiva and his *śakti*-s to unify the Sāṃkhya dualism. The doctrine of the momentariness of the *ābhāsa*-s (*kṣaṇikavāda*) is a direct adaptation of Buddhist notions of the impermanence of the *dharma*-s. Furthermore, as Alper has demonstrated, Abhinavagupta's concept of "Śiva-who-is-consciousness" represents a thorough critique of the Advaita Vedānta and the *śānta-brahma-vādin*-s.[3] In addition, there are many startling parallelisms of the symbolism of the Heart with notions enunciated in the Vedic tradition.

There is another horizon to Abhinavagupta's writings which is especially important in considering the *PTlv*, a central Kaula text. This horizon stems from several powerful streams of Shaiva religiosity itself, including the Pāśupatas, the Siddhas, especially the group known as the Nātha Siddhas, and the developing *āgamic* tantric traditions whose "revealed" authoritative texts are so often quoted, especially in the *TĀ*, by Abhinavagupta.

Given the paucity of historical materials available, it is difficult to situate the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition, both historically and doctrinally, within this second horizon. Indeed, an entire study could be devoted simply to outlining the problems involved in sorting out the antecedents of this complicated tradition. Until now, scholars have given more attention to situating Abhinavagupta's synthesis within the streams of Indian religiosity of the first horizon, that is, the darśanic philosophic environments, than the second horizon of Shaiva tantric environments. These two horizons are, of course, not separate, but they do roughly represent the orthodox and heterodox extremes, respectively, of the Indian traditions.[4] In any case it is useful to examine certain environments which will be seen to bear a "family" resemblance to the Kaula portions of Abhinavagupta's writings.

Early Developments in Shaivism

There have been several attempts at tracing the history of Shaivism. Classic studies such as Bhandarkar's, or more recent explorations by Gonda, Jash, and Siddhantashastree, nevertheless provide only the thinnest outlines of the history of Shaivism. There are simply too many large gaps in the sequence that leads from the *Mohenjo-Dara* Proto-Śiva through the Vedic Rudra, the *Yajur Vedic Śatarudrīya*, the Rudra-Śiva of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, the *aṣṭamūrti* and *pañcavaktra* of the Purāṇic Śiva, and the notions of early sectarian groups such as the Pāśupatas, to the increasingly complex theologies of Śiva in different *āgamic* revelations that finally result, in one branch of the process, in the concept of Śiva as taught by Abhinavagupta. What we do know of this process is that Śiva, from being one in a pantheon of divinities, increasingly became the focus of sectarian groups who worshipped him exclusively. This lengthy process of historical development, and the antecedent history of Shaivism that leads to Abhinavagupta and continues beyond him, is extremely complex. The theological intricacies, the density of ritual, and the yogic and tantric complexities of non-dual Kashmiri Shaivism are the result of long centuries of evolution. Unfortunately, we know very little about these centuries.

Jash proposes a classification of these early groups by ordering them

into:[5] (1) the Siddhānta School, by which he means the ordinary Shaivas who followed the Purāṇic doctrine; (2) the Āgamic Shaivas, which includes (a) the Tamil Shaivas, (b) the Liṅgāyats or Vīraśaivas, and (c) the Kashmir Shaivas; (3) the Pāśupatas, which include two subgroups (a) the Kāpālikas and (b) the Kālāmukhas. This classification is useful as long as it is applied with caution. The use of the term Siddhānta could cause some confusion, as southern, Tamil Shaivism has come to be known as Śaiva Siddhānta. This is clearly not what Jash intends, since the Tamil Shaivas are mentioned in the second category. There is more to this complication. Southern Shaivism, which Jash refers to as "Tamil Shaivas," is in fact two traditions, one Sanskrit and one Tamil. Brunner-Lachaux[6] suggests that the Sanskrit tradition be called the Śuddhaśaivas, or even more simply, the Śaivas, and that the term Śaivasiddhānta be reserved for the later parallel, but independent, school based on Tamil texts. This solution is acceptable except that, as Pandey demonstrates,[7] the terms Śaiva, Śaiva Siddhānta and Śuddha Śaiva are often used synonymously to refer to the dualistic Sanskrit tradition. Lorenzen offers another cautionary note[8] in showing that the Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas are not really subsects of the Pāśupatas, but rather are "separate, though closely allied, Śaivite sects."[9] Finally, although the Vīraśaivas appear in this list, it should be noted that they do not belong to the early period preceding Abhinavagupta; instead, they begin to develop around the twelfth century. As can be seen, there has been a great deal of confusion and lack of agreement as to how these terms are to be employed and, more importantly, about the historical relationships between the groups they denote.

It is also clear that followers of Śiva not affiliated with any specific school or tradition of practice continue to this day.[10] Within this heterogeneous mass, various forms have coalesced from time to time into actual groups, sects, and movements. In tracing the appearance of various Shaiva groups, we do not encounter a linear, evolutionary progression that in any direct way leads to non-dual Kashmiri Shaivism. Yet it can be argued that the *PTlv* and other Kaula and tantric materials in Abhinavagupta's writings are authentic manifestations of the spirit of Shaivism. This Shaivite heritage becomes apparent when we examine the early Shaiva groups who exhibited powerful tendencies toward a religious practice that is yogic and tantric in character. It is in these early environments that the ideas and practices enunciated in the Kaula lineage must have first evolved.

An early example of this yogic tendency appears in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, which is traced to the fifth or sixth centuries B.C.E.[11] Here the central teaching is of Rudra-Śiva as the Supreme Being, the great Self, seated in the Heart of creatures. To know him is to become immortal.[12] To achieve this end a series of yogic and meditative practices are prescribed,[13] such

as holding the body steady and then causing the senses and the mind to enter into the Heart. The subtle breath is to be controlled. As a result of these practices, the text tells us, the *yogin* will see the preliminary forms of *brahman:* fog, smoke, sun, wind, fire, fireflies, lightning, and a crystal moon.[14] When the *yogin* has acquired a body made of the fire of Yoga, he is no longer subject to sickness, old age, or death.[15] These instructions offer an early expression of a constant Shaivite theme: the yogic process should lead not just to an inner enlightenment, but also to a physiological transformation by which the body itself is led to enlightenment, to immortality.

In the *Mahābhārata*, we encounter for the first time a Śiva who is more personal than the rather abstract figure of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.*[16] Dwelling in the Himālayas with his wife, Umā, he is the divine *yogin* who practices great austerities and yet whose symbol is the *liṅga*, a complex symbol that in one of its meanings represents the powerful sexuality of the God. O'Flaherty has engaged in an intricate study of this paradoxical god as he appears in the Great Epic and in the Purāṇic materials. She comments that

> the wide applicability of the recurrent supplementary themes from the Purāṇic corpus is evident from the role that they play in one of the enduring problems of Hindu mythology, the paradox of Śiva the erotic ascetic. This problem has often been noted and by now is sometimes accepted as a matter of fact: the great ascetic is the god of the phallus (the *liṅga*). The meaning of this paradox has never been properly explored.[17]

O'Flaherty argues that though this central paradox of Shaiva mythology can never be resolved, the figure of Śiva can act as a mediating principle between the contradictions and oppositions involved. As she suggests,

> the mediating principle that tends to resolve the contradictions is in most cases Śiva himself. Among ascetics he is a libertine and among libertines an ascetic; conflicts which they cannot resolve, or can attempt to resolve only by compromise, he simply absorbs into himself and expresses in terms of other conflicts. Where there is excess, he opposes and controls it; where there is no action, he himself becomes excessively active. He emphasizes the aspect of himself which is unexpected, inappropriate, shattering any attempt to achieve superficial reconciliation of the conflict through mere logical compromise. . . . The erotic ascetic is precisely such an "abnormal" and "anomalous" figure. Śiva is particularly able to mediate in this way because of his protean character; he is all things to all men. He merely brings to a head the extreme and therefore the least reconcilable aspects of the oppositions which, although they may be resolved in various ways on the divine level, are almost never reconciled on the human level.[18]

While Abhinavagupta's Śiva is much less "mythological" in character than the Purāṇic Śiva, O'Flaherty's suggestive words are still quite applicable to it. For the non-dual Kashmiri Shaivas, Śiva, who is identified with the supreme consciousness, performs a different, though equally important, mediating function. In his omnipresence, he is to be found at the intersection or junction point between any two states of awareness, no matter how opposed. As a result of Śiva's unboundedness, any attempt to pin him down theologically results in his manifesting himself as the opposite quality as well. Because of this unpredictability, there is an unexpectedness, a continual surprise, even an astonishment, in the experience of the *yogin* as he approaches Śiva through the different levels of Yoga.[19]

Indeed, it is precisely in this pursuit of tantric Yoga that Hinduism is able to achieve a reconciliation of the usually opposed goals of enjoyment (*bhoga*) and liberation (*mokṣa*). This reconciliation becomes one of the hallmarks of the tantric tradition. Yet O'Flaherty resists any attempt, such as those made by Bharati, to see in the *tantra*-s the origin of the purāṇic Śiva:

> The Tantric element in medieval Śaiva mythology is undeniable, but it is false to seek the origins of Śiva's sexual ambiguity in this comparatively late development. The ithyphallic condition has been attributed by some not to priapism but to the Tantric ritual of seminal retention. To a certain extent, this technique may be considered a manifestation of yogic chastity, but Śiva's raised *liṅga* is symbolic of the power to spill the seed as well as to retain it.[20]

This is an interesting comment. Rather than see in the *tantra*-s the origin of the Shaiva symbolism of the *liṅga*, it might be argued that Tantric schools naturally arose in Shaiva environments precisely because of this affinity of symbolism. Of course, some scholars locate the origins of the Tantra elsewhere, especially in Buddhism. We shall not approach this question here. It is perhaps an ultimately insoluble historical problem.[21] There are also certain Shaiva schools that did not condone some of the more extreme "left-handed" tantric practices.[22] However, the fact remains that Shaivism was the most congenial environment for the developing tantric traditions.[23] In these tantric groups, the *liṅga*, while retaining its primary emblematic identification with the procreative organ of the male, takes on additional esoteric connotations. Certainly, the notion of the *ūrdhvaretas*, one whose seed is raised up, describes a technical condition of chastity. As O'Flaherty comments, "by synecdoche, the seed is often confused with the *liṅga* itself, which is 'raised' in chastity."[24] The "yogic" effect of this elevation is homologized with the rising *kuṇḍalinī*, which ascends through the erect spine of the meditative *yogin* and spills itself

out into the skull in the form of the nectar of immortality, *soma*. This "inner" ejaculation and orgasm, which results from the culmination of the *yogin*-s union with Śiva, will be discussed in a later chapter. Its significance in this context is that while "external" sexual rituals were carried out in the Tantra, sexual symbolism need not be limited to the discussion of the sexual ritual. Rather, it may simply be a language for discussing extraordinary spiritual phenomena.

In a powerful study of the Shaiva myth cycle, Stella Kramrisch emphasizes a holistic, interpretive approach.

> The myths of Śiva have many levels. They have to be entered all at the same time, or else the total, multiple perspective of each is lost sight of. Crazed beggar, savior, necrophiliac, voluptuary, ascetic, he is each wholly on the plane where he acts, while on another plane he is Sadāśiva, the eternal Śiva, who lays out his presence in his five faces, of which the fifth, invisible in principle, is part of the *pañcamukha liṅga*, Śiva's concrete, monumental symbol.[25]

Kramrisch repeatedly highlights the cosmic perspective of the primordial acts that bring about "creation." Here is her description of an early myth fragment:

> The Father had broken the state of wholeness that existed before the fall of the seed. This state is beyond words. It is indescribable and inaccessible to the senses. It is "neither nonbeing nor being" (RV.10.129.1). But if that much can be said about it, it has also been said that it is "nonbeing and being" (RV.10.5.7), and that out of nonbeing came being in the first age of the god (RV.10.72.2). It is then that the indefinable wholeness of the total absence or the total presence of both nonbeing and being appears to recede and to set up the screen on which are seen the large figures of gods and their actions. This state of "neither nonbeing nor being," or simultaneously "nonbeing and being" is not within the range of thought. It is a plenum that defies definition, for it has no limits. Yet it is not a chaos, the "darkness covered by darkness," said to have existed before the beginning of the ordered universe (RV.10.129.3). In its precosmic, preconscious totality, everything is contained, including consciousness and nothingness. Metaphysically, it did not cease when the cosmos came into existence, for it is not subject to time. Mythically, its wholeness has been injured. Mystically, its nameless plenum is inaccessible except in the state of *samādhi*, the final stage of yoga leading to *mokṣa*, the total release from all contingencies. Words like plenum, totality, and wholeness are used here merely as symbols of the Uncreate. Rudra, the guardian of the Uncreate, an undefinable transcendental plenum, avenged the infringement of that wholeness.[26]

This remarkable analysis refuses to sunder the "philosophical" and mythological dimensions of Shaivism. A similarly unified perspective characterizes Abhinavagupta's formulations.

Gonda emphasizes the importance in purāṇic Shaivism of the two doctrines of the five faces (*pañcavaktra*) and the eight embodiments (*aṣṭamūrti*) of Śiva.[27] The five faces are named Īśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Aghora, Vāmadeva and Sadyojāta. These faces appear also in the *PTlv* where they are termed the "pentad of *brahman*" (*brahmapañcaka*). The eight embodiments are composed of the traditional five elements, to which are added the sun, moon, and the sacrificer, and each of these is given one of the traditional names of Śiva. Our interest here is not in the details of these two doctrines, which are actually rather complex. Rather it is useful to emphasize one aspect of their meaning. Gonda puts it quite well when he says:

> This doctrine of the five manifestations of Śiva, who according to his worshippers is first and foremost the Great Lord, expresses the belief that he is the All, the Highest and the Unique who embraces and comprises the universe and all beings and of whom they are composed. . . . It emphasizes . . . God's identity with the universe and the universe's identity with God who is omnipresent and manifests Himself and His activity always and everywhere.[28] It is, to conclude with, sufficiently clear that Śivaite speculation, utilizing elements of an ancient cosmological myth and guided by the influential Sāṃkhya theory of the evolution of the world and the cosmic processes, had remodelled the ancient idea of God's eight aspects distributed over the whole universe into a system of His eightfold manifestation, presence and activity which at the same time expressed the fundamental truth that God and the world are one.[29]

In our final chapter, we will see that this search for "oneness" leads to very sophisticated formulations, especially in the concept of *saṃpuṭīkaraṇa*, the "englobing" of consciousness.

It is not out of place to underscore the connection of Śiva with the numbers five and three, which Kramrisch has called Śiva's "sacred numbers."[30] Larson has shown the importance of numerical connections in the Sāṃkhya,[31] which Gonda mentions as one of the possible sources for these doctrines. We will see later on the centrality of *three* in the Trika, especially in relation to Śiva, as well as the importance of *five* in the Krama lineage and elsewhere, particularly in relation to the *Śakti*-s. These two "add up" to the wholeness of *eight*.

Pāśupatas

The earliest Shaiva sectarian group is known as the Pāśupatas.[32] The school's reputed founder, Lakulīśa, the Lord Who Bears A Club, who is also known as Nakulīśa, probably lived around the first half of the second century C.E.[33] Most scholars attribute the *Pāśupata-sūtra*-s

to him. A commentary on these *sūtra*-s, the *Pañcārtha-bhāṣya*, was written by Kauṇḍinya sometime around 500 C.E. There, Kauṇḍiya explains the five topics of the *Pāśupata* doctrine, which include (1) *kārya* (effect), (2) *kāraṇa* (cause), (3) *yoga* (meditation), (4) *vidhi* (practices), and (5) *duḥkhānta* (end of sorrows).[34] The importance of this school is that its followers develop an intense form of asceticism in order to gain union with Śiva (*rudrasāyujya*).[35] This union is accompanied by the production and display of supernormal powers of all kinds, including omniscience and even immortality.[36] Ascetics of this school intentionally court disrepute by all sorts of mad, incoherent, and disreputable behavior. The explicit justification is that these bizarre actions purge their sins and gain the ascetics the merit of those who abuse them. In fact, this is an instance of imitation of Śiva by behavior that is unexpected and inappropriate. The only "yogic" practice mentioned in the *Pāśupata-sūtra*-s is, interestingly, the meditation in the Heart. Sūtra 5.25 reads, "one should perform meditation in the Heart" (*hṛdi kurvīta dhāraṇām*). In the commentary, we are told that the Heart is synonymous with the *ātman*.[37] Abhinavagupta, who, as we shall see, expounds a fully developed Shaivite Heart doctrine, mentions Nakuleśa in the *TĀ* as an authority whose teachings he accepts.[38]

The Kāpālikas and the Kālāmukhas are two closely related sects about whom our information is limited.[39] There is no direct textual basis for any knowledge of their doctrines or practices. Rather, we are left with the often negative and almost certainly prejudiced views of their opponents and detractors, who describe the activities, particularly of the Kāpālikas, the Skull-bearers, in especially outraged terms. Lorenzen's excellent study attempts to reconstruct the activities and beliefs of these two groups. In addition to the contemporary scandalized reports about the Kāpālikas, he uses a number of inscriptions that are scattered across India. His conclusions are that the Kāpālikas were indeed a tantric group of outrageous, wandering ascetics, of which at least one wing indulged in extreme and even ghoulish practices. The evidence suggests[40] that the group was extant beginning as early as the first century C.E., but perhaps as late as the fifth century.

Lorenzen offers us a passage from Rāmānuja which discusses the main features of the Kāpālika worship:

> As the Kāpālas declare: "He who knows the essence of the six insignia (*mudrikā-ṣaṭka*), who is proficient in the highest *mudrā*, and who meditates on the Self as seated in the vulva (*bhagāsana-stha*), attains *nirvāṇa*." They define the six insignia (*mudrā*) as the *kaṇṭhikā* (necklace), the *rucaka* (another neck ornament), the *kuṇḍala* (earring), the *śikhāmaṇi* (crest-jewel), ashes, and the sacred thread. A person bearing these insignia is not born again in this world.[41]

Lorenzen continues by noting that "they have two secondary insignia (*upamudrā*)—the skull (*kapāla*), and the club—(*khaṭvāṅga*)."[42] Although the above passage is a late one, the picture that emerges is of a typically tantric group, related perhaps to the Kānphaṭā *yogin*-s and to the Nātha Siddhas.

In contrast, when Lorenzen treats the Kālāmukhas, he argues (against Bhandarkar)[43] that the Kālāmukhas (bearing a black stripe on the face?)[44] were a group more directly related to the Pāśupatas,[45] who practiced various forms of asceticism but not the extreme tantric practices of the Kāpālikas. He provides evidence to support the theory that the Kālāmukhas originated in Kashmir, and by the end of the eighth century began to migrate south, becoming an extremely important sect in tenth-to-thirteenth-century Mysore.[46]

Unfortunately, no texts describing this group's beliefs and rituals have survived, and the little we know about them is derived from temple inscriptions. From the scanty information of these two groups and our knowledge of the Pāśupatas, we can conclude that early on within Shaiva circles, groups of ascetics were undertaking various forms of yogic practices, some of which may have been based on the powerful idea that enlightenment or union with Rudra must be fearlessly pursued with whatever means are at one's disposal. These practitioners may have included some who specialized in a kind of defiant asssault on conventional morality. The religious ideal of these wandering ascetics is probably best instantiated in the figure of Śiva, personified as the naked, priapic, wandering *yogin* who haunts cemeteries and other fearful places. Here Śiva is seen as a fearful and powerful figure: covered with ashes, performing frightful austerities, he stands outside the safe fold of the *varṇāśrama dharma* and challenges its virtuous but unenlightened followers.[47]

Later, more sophisticated formulations, such as those of Abhinavagupta, argue that spiritual ignorance is precisely the attachment to polarities of good and evil, purity and impurity, right and wrong, and life and death. It is precisely the attachment to these polarities that constitutes conventional morality. The ascetic confronts his own and others' ignorance by challenging, among other things, the prevailing conventional morality of society. The result may be, of course, that the ascetic is, in turn, almost certainly misunderstood, if not reviled, by the society from which he separates himself in the search for Śiva.

There are many Shaivite myths connected with the symbolism of the search for immortality. A central myth involves the churning of the ocean to obtain the ambrosia of immortality. Although this has been interpreted by some scholars as a creation myth,[48] the image more deeply signifies yogic processes involving the journey of return to the source from which

creation emerges. As the story is told in the *Mahābhārata*,[49] the gods and demons churn the ocean in tug-of-war fashion using the Mount Mandara as a churning stick and the serpent Vāsuki as a cord. As they churn the ocean various things begin to emerge: the moon, the goddess Śrī, the white horse of the sun, the *kaustubha* gem, and the great elephant, Airāvata. As they continue to churn, evil, demonic things also emerge; most threatening is the terrible poison, *kālakūṭa*, which paralyzes the three worlds with its dreadful fumes. Śiva comes to the rescue by drinking and holding the poison in his throat, which turns blue as a result. A magic, wish-granting tree and cow then emerge from the ocean, and the god Dhanvantari comes forth holding a white pot of ambrosia. Viṣṇu gives the ambrosia of immortality to the gods to drink and tricks the demons into giving up their share. When the demons realize that they have been deceived a terrible battle ensues, from which the gods finally emerge victorious.

This myth may be interpreted on many levels. In yogic and tantric circles, the myth refers to internal spiritual and bodily processes in which the ocean of consciousness is 'churned' using the 'serpent', *kuṇḍalinī*. The end result is that the gods, who here are the equivalents of the tantric *yogin*'s positive internal forces, become immortalized by the drinking of the nectar of ambrosia that finally emerges from the 'ocean'. During the process many phenomena, both dazzling and attractive as well as negative and poisonous, will also emerge, and these may cause the *yogin* to deviate from the process of Yoga and hence impede his progress toward the nectar.

Another important element of the myth is that both the positive and negative elements, the gods and the demons, must cooperate in a rhythmic fashion for the 'churning' to be successful. The sun and moon play a prominent role in this myth, and the moon is identified with the Vedic *soma*, the elixir of immortality. As we shall see later on, the sun and moon take on important esoteric meanings related to the internal process of generating immortality. The moon is divided into sixteen parts of which the sixteenth is said to be the immortal underlying essence of the ever-waxing and waning moon.

The form of Śiva most often encountered in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva texts is called Bhairava.[50] Representations of this god show a form of dread and terror. A sinister fanged face often surmounted by writhing serpents conveys the fury of the god of death, who is also the god of regeneration and renewal. Bhairava is the interlocutor in the *PTlv*, the god who teaches the Bhagavatī the secrets of liberation. This god's importance to the tradition is also seen in his appearance in the title of several *tantra*-s, including the influential *Vijñāna-bhairava*. The term

Bhairava derives from the root *bhī*, to be afraid, and the related adjective *bhīru*, fearful, timid. By a process of inversion Bhairava comes to mean frightful, terrible, horrible.

O'Flaherty recounts a central myth in the tradition: the beheading of Brahmā by Śiva.[51] We have already seen that Śiva is said to have five faces or heads. In this myth, the god Brahmā also has five faces or five heads. Śiva, in the form of Bhairava, cuts off one of these with the tip of the nail of his left thumb. Because he is now guilty of the sin of Brahminicide, Bhairava is condemned to wander, begging for alms and carrying Brahmā's skull. Lorenzen elucidates the compelling parallels between this myth and the *mahāvrata* vow for the removal of sin for accidentally killing a *brāhmaṇa*, as well as the relation of both to the Kāpālikas.[52]

> An important aspect of this ritual communion with Śiva-Kapālin seems to have been the identification of the devotee's begging skull with the skull of Brahmā. As their name indicates, this skull bowl was the Kāpālika trademark. In the *Prabhodacandrodaya*, the Kāpālika describes himself as one who "eats from a human skull" and says that "the conclusion of our fast (is accomplished) by drinking liquor distributed in the skull of a Brahman."[53]

Eliade has commented on what he terms the "symbolical confusionism" involved in "forgetting" the yogic meanings involved in the "corpse," the "skeleton," the "cemetery," and "drinking from a skull."

> The process may be imagined as follows. (1) An archaic ideology, connected with a particular lunar symbolism, implied, among other things, human sacrifice and skull hunting; populations holding these ideas were, during the historical period, settled in zones bordering on Hinduism. (2) On the level of the highest Indian spirituality, the cemetery, corpses, and skeletons were revalorized and incorporated into an ascetico-mystical symbolism; to meditate seated on a corpse, to wear a skull, etc., now represented spiritual exercises that pursued a wholly different order of values from those, let us say, of the head-hunters. (3) When the two ideologies come into contact . . . we witness a phenomenon of pseudomorphism and devalorization. In this light, we can understand how one or another tantric yoga becomes licentious; . . . we also understand why a particular Kāpālin forgets the yogic meaning of the "corpses" and the "skeleton" and becomes a head-hunter. Above all, these reciprocal degradations and devalorizations are explained by "symbolical confusionism," by a symbolism being forgotten or inadequately comprehended.[54]

These remarks are important for understanding an ongoing process of misinterpretation that has taken place in both tantric and yogic circles. We shall see that Abhinavagupta continuously emphasizes an interpretation

of tantric symbolism in terms of the inner phenomena of consciousness. For example, he relates the symbolism involved in "drinking from the skull" to the "drinking of *soma*" associated with the inner ascent of the *kuṇḍalinī*. This emphasis on internal interpretation is not to say that certain external rituals did not form a valid, though probably much less central, part of tantric practice.

In addition to the Kāpālikas and the Kālāmukhas, another imperfectly known group appears within Shaiva circles in these early centuries which is known as the Siddhas or Perfected Ones. Of particular interest is a subgroup of these Siddhas known as the Nātha Siddhas. Lorenzen notes the connection between the Kāpālikas and the Nātha Siddhas, also known as the Kānphaṭās (Split-Ears), or Gorakhnāthīs (from the name of their reputed founder, Gorakṣa-nātha), tradition.[55] He points out that the *Gorakṣa-siddhānta-saṃgraha* states that:

> Indeed, some people believe that these (Siddhas) hold the Kāpālika doctrine on account of the mention of the devotion of the Kāpālika, but that is not actually (the case). Our doctrine is beyond all worldly ties (*avadhūta*). Nonetheless, the Kāpālika doctrine was also revealed by Nātha (Śiva). Nātha was the revealer of this path.[56]

This comment establishes a link that leads from the Kāpālikas, themselves indirectly related to the Pāśupatas, to the Nātha Siddhas. Later on we shall see that another link joins the Nātha Siddhas to the Kaula lineage.[57] Thus there are a series of linked traditions, which, though not identical in content or practice, do provide a line of continuity in Shaiva practice that passes right through the center of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition.

Many of the texts of the *Haṭha Yoga* are attributed to Gorakṣanātha. Again, many of these texts are quite late, perhaps contemporary with Abhinavagupta or even later.[58] The figure of Gorakṣanātha and that of his teacher Matsyendranātha are obscured by many levels of legend. Two excellent studies which attempt to clarify the tradition have been produced: Briggs' extremely informative book, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphata Yogīs*, and S. B. Dasgupta's *Obscure Religious Cults*.[59] Despite this scholarly attention, much work remains to be done in sorting out these early, popular, yogic movements.

This early yogic movement was connected with even earlier alchemical formulations as well as with the subsequent elaboration of these alchemical processes into a process known as *kāya-sādhana*—the "perfecting" of the body. As Dasgupta says,

> The Nāth cult seems to represent a particular phase of the Siddha cult of India.

> This Siddha cult is a very old religious cult with its main emphasis on a psycho-chemical process of yoga, known as the *kāya-sādhana* or the culture of the body with a view to making it perfect and immutable and thereby attaining immortal spiritual life. To escape death . . . was the central point round which grew the details of the Siddha cult, and the Siddhas in general hold "that death may either be put off *ab libitum* by a special course of restrengthening and revitalizing the body so as to put it permanently *en rapport* with the world of sense, or to be ended definitively by dematerializing and spiritualizing the body, according to prescription, so that it disappears in time in a celestial form from the world of sense, and finds its permanent abode in the transcendental glory of God." This Siddha school seems to be closely associated with the Indian school of *Rasāyana* and it is sometimes held that the Siddha school was originally based on the theories and practices of the *Rasāyana* school.[60]

The aim of the Nātha Siddhas was certainly to achieve the condition known as *jīvan-mukti*, or liberation while still alive. This condition of freedom then led to the further goal of *para-mukti*, in which the liberated one is 'immortalized' in a perfected body that, in some respects, makes him an embodied Śiva. Here, union with Śiva comes to mean truly embodying Śiva, with full possession of all of his powers and abilities. The goal is not a resolution or release of a finite soul into an ultimate source or essence. Rather, what is sought is much more daring and ambitious. The *siddha* wishes to stem the current that usually leads to death, by means of the *ulṭā-sādhanā*, the regressive process. Says Dasgupta:

> The yoga practices of the Nāth Siddhas is *Ulṭā* or regressive, firstly in the sense that it involves yogic processes which give a regressive or upward motion to the whole biological as well as psychological systems which in their ordinary nature possess a downward tendency; and in the sense that such yogic practices lead the Siddha to his original ultimate nature as the immortal *Being* in his perfect or divine body.[61]

This regressive process involves a practice of introverting the mind, of turning the mind away from its outward course in which it is directed towards the external sensory world. It also involves a parallel process of arresting the vital breath so that it turns back from its ordinary respiratory flow. Finally, both of these processes are linked to a "regression" of the sexual energy and sexual secretion, which are redirected from their usual outward flow in the ordinary sexual act. Instead, they are elevated and transmuted as the *mahā-rasa*, or "great essence." This essence trickles from the 'moon' in the *sahasrāra*, or thousand-petalled lotus. A technique known as the *khecarī-mudrā* is employed to save the immortalizing essence from falling into the 'sun' in the navel, also known as the *kālāgni*, the

fire of destruction, where it would be burned up and destroyed.

While the details of this fascinating process cannot be explored here, it can at least be mentioned that the *khecarī-mudrā* forms an important part of Abhinavagupta's *PTlv*. In his commentary, Abhinavagupta hints at an "immortalizing" process that spreads outwards from the Heart into the body. This process must be understood in terms of its connection with the esoteric yogic processes just described. No doubt, this subject is liable to great misinterpretation. In this respect, it is especially relevant to note that the Nātha Siddhas were uncompromisingly celibate.[62] Their celibacy is not surprising, given the importance of transmuting rather than spending the sexual essence. Yet it is clear that many of the yogic and tantric groups who inherited these ideas also engaged in some form of sexual ritual (as opposed to the sexual symbolism of the union of Śiva and *śakti*, for example, which even the Nātha Siddhas employ). The complications inherent in this apparent (and very Shaivite) incongruity will be discussed later on. The important point is simply that the ideas propounded by the Nātha Siddhas form the core teaching of many yogic, tantric, Shaivite formulations. It is unfortunate that no early, detailed texts explaining these practices have survived:

> The religious views of the Nāth Siddhas are as much obscured by the insufficiency and anomaly of accounts as is the history of the whole cult. The distinctive features of their yogic practices as also the theories behind them are not found explained systematically in any of the Sanskrit or non-Sanskrit texts, associated with the cult somehow or other. The Sanskrit texts are mainly texts on Haṭha-yoga in general and the vernacular texts are mainly poetical texts on legends and myths.[63]

Abhinavagupta's writings are of crucial importance as the first serious exposition of the tantric yoga theories that have survived into our hands.

Āgama-s and Śaivasiddhānta

Perhaps the most important textual sources for the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition are the body of scripture known collectively as the *āgama*-s. These texts, which were considered as authoritative, and even "revealed" scripture, began to appear perhaps as early as the fourth century, but probably certainly by the seventh or eighth century.[64] Many of the *āgama*-s cited by Abhinavagupta have been lost, and of the very large *āgama* literature that survives, very little has been critically edited, translated, or studied. Yet these are exceedingly important texts. According to Gonda,

> The Śivaite *āgama*-s are not only by far our main source of knowledge of the older phases of Śivaite religious practice and the interrelations between Southern and Kashmirian Śivaism, they give also very welcome information on the history of Indian religion and philosophy in general. They served as the doctrinal basis of Śivaite monasticism and as the fundamental manuals for liturgies and religious practices. They are also of special importance for the history of Hindu art. . . . In short, they prove to be an indispensable mine of information on various aspects of Hinduism.[65]

The subject matter of these texts is traditionally and perhaps stereotypically divided into four sections, or quarters (*pāda*). The ideal structure involves one section devoted to higher knowledge (*jñāna*), which leads to ultimate freedom and enlightenment. Another section would treat the practices and techniques (*yoga*) employed to achieve that ultimate freedom. A third section would deal with all ritual action (*kriyā*) regarding the place of worship, while the fourth would describe the proper mode of behavior (*caryā*) in the performance of daily worship and other rituals.[66] This traditional division, however, more often remains a theoretical model rather than a representation of the actual structure of these texts.

There is also a certain looseness in the traditional use of the term *āgama*. It comes to be applied generally to any authoritative and revealed text. In time, the teachings of these *āgama*-s supersede the ancient Vedic rites. The teachings of the *āgama*-s also embody several religious traditions. Gonda notes that "Visnuite texts of this category are often called *saṃhitā*."[67] Worshippers of the Goddess (Śāktas) often refer to their sacred texts as *tantra*-s. Finally, worshippers of Śiva refer most often to their sacred texts as *āgamas* (or *Śaiva āgamas*). However, these are not hard-and-fast terminological distinctions. For example, one often sees the phrase *śākta āgamas*. Consequently, the employment of the terms *tantra, āgama*, or *saṃhitā* in the title of a text is certainly not enough to establish its doctrinal provenance. Addressing himself to this problem Alper says:

> If a distinction between *āgama* and *tantra* makes any sense, it makes very rough social sense, or perhaps "geo-religious," sense: what in the Northern two thirds of India have come to be called *the* Tantras, tend in South India to be known as *the* Āgamas. Although it suggests an unrealistic division between North and South India, I shall follow the convention established in the HIL. Under *āgama*, I shall refer largely to the *Śaivāgamas* and the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitās* preserved in the South; under *Tantra* I shall refer largely to the parallel literature preserved in the North.[68]

An excellent example appears in the *TĀ* where Abhinavagupta mentions as authoritative both *āgama*-s and *tantra*-s.[69] Important *āgama*-s

cited by Abhinavagupta include the *Kāmika, Kiraṇa, Niḥśvāsa, Pauṣkara, Raurava, Svāyambhuva, Pārameśvara*, and others.[70] These texts place great emphasis on the reception of a sacred *mantra* as the central moment of the initiation (*dīkṣā*) that enables one to arrive at Śiva.

Equally influential texts mentioned by Abhinavagupta, however, include the following *tantra*-s: the *Parātrīśikā*, the *Nirmaryāda-tantra, Kālīkula-tantra*, the *Ūrmimahā-tantra, Ratnamālā-tantra, Triśiro-bhairava-tantra, Niśisaṃcāra-tantra, Devyāyāmala-tantra*, the *Siddha-yogeśvarī-mata-tantra, Vijñāna-bhairava-tantra, Svacchanda-tantra, Mṛtyuñjaya-tantra, Matañga-tantra*, and the *Mālinī-vijaya-tantra*.[71] Of these, the *Mālinī-vijaya-tantra* is considered by Abhinavagupta to be the most important and influential *tantra*.

These texts often contain a tantric, and indeed, a *śāktic* tendency.[72] In many of them, the ancient lineage of the Siddhas seems to continue directly into the teachings of the Kaula-s. The texts place a great emphasis on the importance of the Goddess and her worship, which is carried out by the initiated in-group.

Although the *āgama*-s are, as a whole, anonymous, two early teachers in Kashmir who contributed much to their coherent interpretation were Bṛhaspati and Sadyojyotiḥ. They probably lived sometime between the seventh and ninth centuries,[73] and their teaching is known as the Śaiva-siddhānta, the Established Truth of Shaivism. The complications arising from this term's use with respect to the Tamil Shaiva tradition of later times have already been mentioned. However, the fact remains that Abhinavagupta knew of and criticized a dualistic Shaiva tradition in Kashmir known as Siddhānta.[74] In fact, one of Abhinavagupta's major purposes in writing the *TĀ* was to expound the teachings of the *āgama*-s, which, in their "proper" interpretation, he revered in common with all Shaivas.[75]

The Southern Shaiva tradition, in both its Tamil and Sanskrit branches, flourished in the centuries after Abhinavagupta, from about the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. The complex relationships and interactions between Northern and Southern Shaivism need much further exploration. The research that is presently emerging suggests that despite important doctrinal differences, there was much greater ritual and textual continuity than has been previously suspected. It would be patently incorrect, however, to think that Southern Shaivism, because it is apparently later, somehow derives directly from Northern Shaivism, which would then in some way be more authentic. It is perhaps most useful to think of one pan-Indian Śaivāgamic tradition within which these distinctions between Northern and Southern are somewhat false.[76] The development of the Southern

tradition is further complicated in that it involves the melding of two different cultural traditions, the Tamil and the Sanskritic.

The Southern Sanskrit tradition of Śaiva Siddhānta finds its roots in the expositions of Sadyojyotiḥ and Bṛhaspati, and later on in the expositions of Bhojadeva, Rāmakaṇṭha, and many others. In addition, it finds expression in important ritual texts such as the *Soma-śambhu-paddhati.*[77]

With the same background of the *Śaivāgamas* ever present, the Tamil tradition can be traced to the early Shaivite hymnodists known as the NāyaNārs. The *Tirumandiram* of Tirumular (sixth century) is the earliest exposition of the school, which was given a definitive form in the thirteenth century by Meykandar in his *Śiva-jñāna-bodham.* In an authoritative study of the school, K. Sivaraman summarizes the central doctrines:

> As pluralistic in the sense of being non-absolutistic, Śaiva Siddhānta conceives reality in three ultimate, irreducible modes—*pati*, the Lord (God); *paśu*, the bound soul (self); *pāśa*, the bond (world). The three are not mere appearances, distinctions set up and held apart in the whole that is reality. They are modes of reality distinct and primordial. It is not possible to derive one from another and much less all the three from a whole or unity. The alternative to a philosophy of one real seems to be a philosophy of three reals.[78]

Indeed, the Śaiva Siddhānta shares many of its doctrinal categories with the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas. In many cases, however, there are subtle reinterpretations of meaning. The final aim of the school is to achieve *sāyujya*—union with God. As T. M. P. Mahadevan comments,

> The soul's attainment of *Śivatva* does not mean its mergence of its being in Śiva. The entitative difference of the soul from Śiva is maintained even in *mokṣa*. The *jīva* can claim God's nature as its own too, but not that it itself is God. The difference between bondage and release is this: while in the former the soul's experience is through *pāśa* (bond), in the latter it is through *pati* (i.e. Lord). . . . There is also this difference between the released soul and God. While the soul is now free from *mala* and enjoys the bliss of *Śiva*, it does not share with the latter His five functions. . . . *Mokṣa* thus is not a state of bare identity; it is the experience of unity-in-duality.[79]

It will be apparent later on that the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition does teach a state of identity with *Śiva* as constituting its highest goal. We should turn now to the historical origins and development of the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas in the centuries preceding Abhinavagupta.

Non-Dual Shaivism of Kashmir

The foundations of the tradition are firmly rooted in the *āgama śāstra* which we have just discussed. Various lists of these texts come down to us; we have already mentioned that Abhinavagupta considered the *Mālinī-vijaya-tantra* as the most authoritative. The list of eleven *tantra*-s usually includes the *Svacchanda*, the *Vijñāna-bhairava*, the *Ucchuṣma-bhairava*, the *Ānanda-bhairava*, the *Mṛgendra, Matanga, Netra, Naiśvāsa, Svāyambhuva*, and *Rudra-yāmala*. The so-called *Parātriṃśikā* verses commented on by Abhinavagupta in his *PTv* and *PTlv* are said to form the last part of the the *Rudra-yāmala-tantra*. Some scholars argue, however, that this latter text, the *Rudra-yāmala-tantra*, was merely a "convenience" title and that no such text ever existed. Goudriaan demonstrates that while there are two separate published texts which link themselves to the *RYT*, an *Uttara-tantra* and an *Anuttara-tantra*, neither text is linked to the verses commented on in the *PTv* and *PTlv*. There are as many as fifty other texts which claim to derive from this mysterious *tantra* of which perhaps the earliest are precisely the *Parātriṃśikā* verses and the *Vijñāna-bhairava*.[80] It is significant that Abhinavagupta refers to the *Parātriṃśikā* as the *Trika-sūtra* because it expounds the fundamental teachings of the Trika, that is, the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition.[81]

Of these texts, the *Svacchanda-tantra* is a massive text (comprising six volumes in the Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies) which is commented on by Kṣemarāja. The emphasis of the text is on ritual, yogic techniques, *mantra*-s, *prāṇa*, and the enunciation of the *mantra OṂ*, which is divided into twelve stages.[82] Unfortunately, no translation of the text has yet been published. Connected with this text is the *Netra-tantra*, also known as the *Mṛtyujit*, for which Kṣemarāja also wrote a commentary. A summary of this text has been published by Brunner. The main theme of the book is a form of Śiva known as the Eye (Netra), or the Conqueror of Death (Mṛtyuñjaya), or the Lord of Immortality (Amṛteśa). It teaches a *mantra*, known by these same names: *OṂ JUṂ SAḤ*. The text abounds with descriptions of techniques for the use of *mantra*-s, magical procedures, lists of divinities, names of schools, and so on.[83] Both of these texts are cited by Abhinavagupta in the *TĀ*, and it can be assumed that Kṣemarāja's commentary on them reflects, as do all of his comments, his understanding of his master's teachings.

The *Vijñāna-bhairava* is a work of great importance. Abhinavagupta's respect for it is evidenced in his having termed it *Śiva-vijñāna-upaniṣad*, "the Esoteric Teaching for the Direct Knowledge of Śiva."[84] Although it is a relatively brief text of 163 stanzas, each of its verses represents a

compressed description of a particular meditation method (*bhāvanā*) for entering into Śiva. Silburn has published an excellent translation of the work, which incorporates the fragment of a commentary by Kṣemarāja; unfortunately, this commentary breaks off at verse 18. The emphasis of this rich text is on the direct, personal experience of the Supreme rather than on any ritualistic or external performances. It is a crucial text for our present purposes, and we will return to consider the appearance of the Heart in its verses. Its close relationship with the Kaula environment is evidenced in a statement by the Goddess that as a result of Śiva's exposition, she now understands the essence of the *Rudra-yāmala-tantra*.[85]

Perhaps the highest place in the *Āgama Śāstra* is reserved by the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas for the *Mālinī-vijaya* or *Mālinī-vijayottara-tantra*. This text is also referred to as the *Pūrva-śāstra*, the first doctrine. The *mālinī*, or more precisely, the *uttara-mālinī*, refers to a particular arrangement of the fifty Sanskrit phonemes that was held to be of the highest ritual and mystical value.[86] Abhinavagupta praises the *Mālinī-vijayottara-tantra* (*MVT*) in the highest terms at the beginning of his *TĀ*.[87] References to the *MVT* abound in the *TĀ*, which, in some sense, can well be considered a detailed explanation and expansion of its doctrines. In addition, Abhinavagupta wrote a commentary, the *Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika*, which numbers some fifteen hundred verses that are devoted to the elucidation of the first verse of the *MVT*. He is also said to have written another commentary on it entitled the *Pūrva-pañcikā*, but unfortunately this has not survived.[88] Gnoli has translated the first half of the *MVT* in an appendix to his *TĀ*. Unfortunately, chapter 19, devoted to the *kula-cakra*, has not been translated, but Gnoli has translated enough to give us the overall tenor of the work. The main thrust of the text involves technical explanations of the use of *mantra*-s and the various levels of meditative absorption (*samāveśa*) that result from their use. The introductory verses of the text claim that it is part of the much larger *Siddha-yogeśvarī-mata-tantra*, a reference that once again underscores the relationship between the Kashmiri tradition and the old lineage of the Siddhas. Here again, we see the centrality of the Kaula line, as this *SYT* is the fundamental text of that tradition, and so, as the origin of the *MVT*, it stands at the very center of the *āgama śāstra* that forms the foundation of the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas.

The first text of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition proper is the *Śiva-sūtra*-s which is said to have been inspirationally revealed to a sage named Vasugupta in about the middle of the ninth century. Kṣemarāja wrote an important comment on it called the *Vimarśinī*. Silburn has presented a translation of the text and its commentary, along with her valuable interpretative notes. The overall structure of the text arranges

the very concise *sūtra*-s into three chapters. It is significant that *sūtra* 15 of the first chapter teaches a "unification" of consciousness in the Heart. We will consider this passage in the next chapter.

The *Śiva-sūtra*-s in effect begin the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition as a separate branch of Shaivism. Thus, Vasugupta in some sense may be considered the founder of the tradition, although from the point of view of the tradition itself, it is of course Śiva who is its founder. Vasugupta apparently had two disciples, Kallaṭa and Somānanda, although there is considerable doubt as to whether the latter was in fact one of his disciples. Kallaṭa is mentioned in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* as being a contemporary of King Avantivarman, who is usually considered to have reigned from 855 to 883.[89] There is some debate about whether Vasugupta or Kallaṭa wrote the *Spanda-kārikā*-s, the next important non-dual Kashmir Shaiva text, which deal with consciousness as *spanda*—vibration.[90] Given the close nature of the master-disciple relationship, often the teachings of the master are codified and arranged by the disciple, and this is perhaps what happened in this case. In any case, Kallaṭa wrote a commentary, *Spanda-vṛtti*, as well as two commentaries, now lost, on the *Śiva-sūtra*-s. Kṣemarāja also wrote two important commentaries on the *Spanda-kārikā*-s, the *Spanda-sandoha* and the *Spanda-nirṇaya*. We do not have reference to any commentary by Abhinavagupta on the *Spanda-kārikā*-s. Of course, since Kṣemarāja was such a close interpreter of his master's teachings, we may perhaps take his two comments as embodying Abhinavagupta's views on this text.[91]

Somānanda is known mainly as the author of the *Śiva-dṛṣṭi*, a very difficult text in seven chapters that has yet to be translated satisfactorily. While the *Śiva-sūtra*-s and *Spanda-kārikā*-s are concerned mainly with presenting the various paths toward spiritual enlightenment, Somānanda's text takes a much more argumentative and philosophical approach to the problem of Ultimate reality. He directs powerful attacks at the grammarians and also at the Śāktas, as well as passing criticisms of the Buddhists and the *darśana*-s. Somānanda is also credited as being the founder of the Pratyabhijñā branch of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition.[92] He wrote a commentary which unfortunately has been lost, called the *Parātriṃśikā-vivṛti*, which Abhinavagupta quotes in his *PTv*. However, it was Utpalācārya, Somānanda's disciple, who popularized the doctrine of Recognition in his *Pratyabhijñā-kārikā*-s as well as in numerous other texts. Abhinavagupta can be directly connected to both these branches, the Spanda and the Pratyabhijñā, through his teachers: Lakṣmaṇagupta, who was a disciple of Utpaladeva's and taught Abhinavagupta the Pratyabhijñā system, and Bhaṭṭendurāja, who was a pupil of Mukula, the son of Kallaṭa.[93]

Historical Notes on Abhinavagupta

The primary sources about Abhinavagupta's life are contained in the final verses of his commentary on the *Parātriṃśikā*[94] and the final verses of his *Tantrāloka*.[95] In his definitive work on Abhinavagupta, Pandey draws these materials together with other hints and inferences to sketch the bare essentials of the available biographical information.

As far as we can tell, Abhinavagupta was born sometime between 950 and 975 C.E. to a rich and noble Brahmin family who resided in what today is the city of Śrīnagar.[96] Abhinavagupta's father, Narasiṃhagupta (or Cukhalaka), descended from Atrigupta, who had been brought to Kashmir by King Lalitāditya (725-761 C.E.). His mother, Vimalā, died when Abhinavagupta was still quite young, and her death had a powerful effect on him. The family were all devotees of Śiva, and so Abhinavagupta grew up in an atmosphere charged with religious devotion and dedication to learning.

Abhinavagupta began his studies with his father but quickly began visiting teachers in Kashmir and elsewhere. He seems to have studied everything he could: traditional texts of the dualistic and monistic Shaivism, literature, drama and aesthetic theory, *darśana*, Krama, Trika, and Kaula doctrines and practices. He also studied under Buddhist and Jain teachers. A love of learning and his spiritual search led him to travel outside of Kashmir, and finally in Jālandhara he encountered Śambhunātha, the powerful master who initiated him into the tantric practices of the Kaula tradition. Abhinavagupta mentions twenty teachers at different places in his works.[97] Of these, the most important, besides Śambhunātha, are Lakṣmaṇagupta, disciple of the great Utpaladeva, under whom Abhinavagupta studied the doctrines of the Pratyabhijñā; Bhūtirāja, who is said to have taught Abhinavagupta the Krama system;[98] Bhāskara, who taught Abhinavagupta the principles of the Spanda tradition, which goes back to the two great teachers, Vasugupta and Kallaṭa; and Bhaṭṭa Tauta, Abhinavagupta's teacher of poetics, drama and philosophy of language.

From the number of teachers mentioned by Abhinavagupta[99] and the difficulty of the subjects he studied with them, it is clear that his was a life dedicated to the absorption of knowledge in an atmosphere of extreme religious fervor and dedication. He lived a life of renunciation and study, and he never married, although for the Shaiva teachers marriage was not incompatible with a life dedicated to intense religious practice. Madhurāja Yogin, a pupil of Abhinavagupta, left four stanzas entitled the *Dhyānaślokāḥ*,[100] which give us a vivid picture of the great master at the height of his creative powers:

May the glorious god Dakṣiṇāmūrti (Abhinavagupta), who is an incarnation of Śiva protect us! Out of his deep compassion he has taken a new bodily form and come to Kashmir. He sits in the middle of a garden of grapes, inside a pavilion made of crystal and filled with beautiful paintings. The room smells wonderful because of flower garlands, incense-sticks and (oil-) lamps. Its walls are smeared with sandal-paste and other such things. The room is constantly resounding with musical instruments, with songs and with dancing. There are crowds of *Yoginī*-s and realized beings, *siddha*-s with magic powers. It is equipped with a golden seat from which pearls are hanging. It has a soft awning (*talima*) stretched over it (as a canopy). Abhinavagupta is attended by all his numerous students, with Kṣemarāja at their head, who are writing down everything he says. To his side stand two women, partners in Tantric rites (*dūtī*), who hold in one hand a jug of wine, *śivarasa*, and a box full of betel rolls, and in the other hand a lotus and a citron. Abhinavagupta has his eyes trembling in ecstasy. In the middle of his forehead is a conspicuous *tilaka* made of ashes. He has a *rudrākṣa* bead hanging from his ear. His long hair is held by a garland of flowers. He has a long beard and golden (reddish-brown) skin; his neck is dark with shining *yakṣapañka* powder. His *upavīta* string is hanging down loose from his neck. He wears a silken cloth (as a dhoti) as white as moon-beams, and he sits in the Yogic position known as *vīrāsana*. One hand is held on his knee holding a rosary with his fingers clearly making the sign (*mudrā*) that signifies his knowledge of the highest Śiva. He plays on his resonating lute with the tips of his quivering fingers of his lotus-like left hand.[101]

Abhinavagupta was a prolific writer. Some twenty-one of his works are available, and we have titles of twenty-three other writings that are now lost. It is probable that he wrote even more than this.[102] His period of literary activity extends from about 990 to about 1014 C.E. Pandey proposes a periodization of Abhinavagupta's texts according to the topics dealt with in each of the texts.[103] He groups all texts dealing with the Tantra into a Tāntrika period, all texts on aesthetics into an Ālañkārikā period, and all works on philosophy into a Philosophical period. This rather neat arrangement has been rightly criticized by Gnoli,[104] who argues that in all probability his three interests peacefully coexisted throughout his life, with Abhinavagupta turning his attention now to poetics, now to religious mysticism, now to philosophy, sometimes producing shorter compositions, and sometimes longer works.

It is extremely difficult to attempt a chronology of Abhinavagupta's literary output. The standard method employs a technique of identifying quotations from earlier works in later works and has been attempted by Pandey with only partially successful results.[105] There simply is not enough evidence on which to base judgements.

However, the important available works by Abhinavagupta can at least be listed without implying anything as to the order of composition,

and without subscribing to Pandey's topical periodization. Of the philosophical works, two are the most important: (1) *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* (*ĪPv*) (*Laghvī-vimarśinī*), a commentary on Utpala's *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-kārikā*-s. Pandey has published a very useful (though in places rather free) translation of this work.[106] The *ĪPv* deserves much more sustained attention and study. (2) *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vivṛti-vimarśinī* (*ĪPvv*) (*Bṛhatī-vṛtti*), which is a commentary on a lost comment by Utpala himself (called the *Vivṛti*) on his own *Kārikā*-s.

Of the tantric works, several must be mentioned. (3) The *Tantrāloka* (*TĀ*) is the most voluminous of all of Abhinavagupta's works. Together with the commentary by Jayaratha called *Viveka*, it runs to some twelve volumes in the Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies edition. Gnoli has published a translation into Italian of the entire text (exclusive of Jayaratha's commentary). This is an extremely important work for our purposes in this study, and we will present translations of several important passages from it. (4) The *Tantrasāra* (*TS*) is a summary of the *TĀ*, which has also been translated into the Italian by Gnoli. (5) The *Parātriṃśikā-vivaraṇa* (*PTv*) is a commentary on a set of verses said to form the concluding portion of the *Rudra-yāmala-tantra*. The verses, together with the comment, are also known as the *Anuttara-prakriyā*. Gnoli has published a critical edition and translation into Italian of this text. The main subject matter consists of a consideration of the phonematic emanation.[107] (6) *Parātrīśikā-laghuvṛtti* (*PTlv*). This is a shorter comment on the same set of verses. It is interesting that Pandey does not seem to mention this work in his book, except under its alternate title of the *Anuttara-tattva-vimarśinī*.[108] It seems fairly clear that he had not seen this work. It has been translated twice, once by Gnoli into Italian, and once by Padoux into French. We shall present here a first rendering into English of this work. (7)*Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika* (*MVv*). This is a partial commentary of the *Mālinī-vijaya-tantra*. It is an important text because this *tantra* was considered as the most authoritative revealed scripture by Abhinavagupta. It seems that what we have of the *MVv* is only a fragment of a larger work which has been lost. This text and the *TĀ* are the two most thorough discussions by Abhinavagupta of the doctrines and rituals of the *MVT*. Unfortunately, the *MVv* has yet to be translated into a Western language.

In addition, Abhinavagupta wrote a number of other works which have come down to us. His *Paramārtha-sāra* is a kind of summary text of some of the essential teachings of the Trika. He also wrote a commentary on the *Bhagavad Gītā* known as the *Bhagavad-gītārtha-saṃgraha*, as well as several shorter compositions.[109] We may also mention Abhinavagupta's two important texts on aesthetics, the *Dhvanyāloka-locana* and the *Abhinava-bhāratī*.

Tantrism: Some General Remarks

It is surprising to realize just how little scholarly attention has been focussed on the study of the Tantra. Alper's comment that for a long time the study of the Tantra was a stepchild of Indology is still valid, despite the apparent current vogue in tantric studies.[110] In comparison with the energy and labor spent on the so-called main lines of development such as the *Veda*, the *Upaniṣad*-s, and classical philosophies, the enormous amounts of tantric material have been until very recently comparatively neglected. Why this neglect has occurred would make a very interesting study in and of itself.[111] Suffice it to say that strong prejudices and insufficient insight led, and perhaps in some circles continue to lead, to a devaluation of a crucial chapter in Indian religious history: the chapter that links the developments of the post-Classical period (approximately 500 C.E.) with what may be termed the premodern or Muslim period (twelfth century onward). It is difficult to understand figures like Kabīr, Caitanya, Mīrābāī, Lallā, Rāmprasād Sen, and Rāmakṛṣṇa without a knowledge of the tantric developments on which their religious world is based.

The purpose here is not to attempt a survey of Tantrism, but rather to introduce some general notions about the characteristics of the Tantra that will provide an orientation to the Kaula tradition, the specific line of Tantrism toward which Abhinavagupta contributed greatly. We will then look at those doctrines in Abhinavagupta's formulations that will form the basis for our consideration of the Heart of Śiva, taken up in the next chapter.

There are very few reliable discussions of the characteristics of the Tantra in a Western language.[112] Woodroffe's early studies are still being printed and consulted, although one must be rather careful in accepting many of his conclusions. Certainly, large portions of Eliade's *Yoga* are given over to a study of the nature of the Tantra. An important general survey, Bharati's *The Tantric Tradition*, plunges the reader directly into the thick of things without attempting a general discussion of what exactly the Tantra is. André Padoux has attempted just such a discussion in his excellent and not-sufficiently-known study, *Recherches sur l'Énergie de la Parole*.[113] Goudriaan, Gupta, and Hoens provide perhaps the most complete rehearsal of just what constitutes the Tantra in *Hindu Tantrism*. Goudriaan and Gupta's excellent *Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature* is the first detailed description of available tantric texts. It will not be out of place, however, to mention a few more important scholars of the Tantra (and in this regard we may refer the reader to the excellent bibliographies to be found in Bharati and Goudriaan).

P. C. Bagchi's excellent, though highly abstruse, *Studies in the Tantras* remains a model to be emulated. Chintaharan Chakravarti's *Tantras: Studies on their Religion and Literature* is a clear, recent survey that deserves to be read more widely. S. B. Dasgupta's *Obscure Religious Cults* introduces the reader to several tantric schools, including the Sahajīyās and the Nātha Yogins, both of which are directly related to Abhinavagupta's Kaulism. Though focussing mostly on the Buddhist Tantra, the several books and articles by Alex Wayman contain much that is useful. Snellgrove's edition, translation, and study of the *Hevajra Tantra* should be read for its sane and straightforward approach to the tradition. The many books by Tucci, especially on the Tibetan Buddhist tantric materials, remain models of clarity and perception. B. Bhattacharyya's *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, though perhaps overly apologetic, still contains much that is of interest. P. Rawson's *The Art of Tantra*, while mainly a book on tantric art, contains compelling insights. The many studies by Gopinath Kaviraj are extremely useful.

The difficulties involved in actually circumscribing the Tantra have often been remarked upon.[114] This difficulty stems directly from the fact that it is not a single school or system that is in question, but rather a broad religious movement which did not respect the boundaries of the older traditions, but spread both within Hinduism[115] and Buddhism, and even amongst the Jains. Beginning sometime around the fourth or fifth century C.E. (some scholars would like to place the date even earlier, some much later[116]) and spreading rather quickly after that, the tantric attitude revised, reshaped, and recast much of what preceded it. This it accomplished by means of subtle yet powerful shifts of emphasis, as well as by important reinterpretations. Some scholars see the Tantra as originating in Buddhist groups, while others see its origin in Hindu environments.[117] This argument has developed into a kind of pointless controversy, since it is probably impossible to solve this historical problem with any degree of certitude. What is important is that we find a ferment and a cross-fertilization of religious ideas and practices occurring between these groups that would change them irrevocably. The following discussion will focus specifically on so-called Hindu tantric groups and, within these, especially on the closely interrelated Shaiva and Śākta subgroupings.

To begin with, the term *tantra* means simply "extension" or "warp on a loom."[118] Eventually it was used in literary environments to refer to any book or tome that explains certain doctrines, and finally the term was applied to the doctrines themselves. Of course, not just any text called a *tantra* is "tantric": the best example of this is a book of Indian fables or moral tales which is title the *Pañcatantra*.

We must also guard against outright equations between the *tantra*

and the Śāktas,[119] which have been judged by Payne to be "two intersecting but not coinciding circles."[120] Certain groups which worshipped the Goddess, or Śakti, as supreme had nothing very "tantric" about them, while many tantric groups were Shaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Buddhist, or even Jain in their primary orientation. The image of intersection is a useful one for describing the nature of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition, which forms at the intersection of Shaivism and Tantrism. Things get even more complicated in the case of Abhinavagupta, because he obviously fed at both Shaiva and Śākta sources.[121] As we shall see, the *śakti* plays a central role in the Kaula formulations.

As an initial characteristic of the Hindu Tantra, a text is tantric which presents itself as revealed, without attaching itself in any way to the Veda.[122] Such texts on the whole prescribe other rituals and other means to salvation than those offered by the Vedic texts—rituals and means which are better adapted than the Vedic Ortho-praxis to the conditions and needs of man in the *kali* age. These rituals and practices typically are open to all, without discrimination or distinction on the basis of caste or sex.[123] These alternative paths and means to salvation are often termed the tantric *sādhanā*. However, to a great extent many of the elements of the traditional brahmanism are conserved in the Tantra.[124]

Secondly, in the tantric texts there is a strong reaction against what may be termed the Upaniṣadic spirit of renunciation.[125] Tantric practitioners strive to reconcile the ascent to *mokṣa* or liberation with the experience of joyful enjoyment of the world, *bhoga*. The tantric *jīvanmukta*, or "one-who-is-liberated-while-still-alive," has not only become a master of himself, but also of the entire universe. He has become a man-god, a divinized being acting within the world rather than seeking to transcend it. Thus, the search is not just for a freedom that releases a person from suffering and transmigration, but for a powerful, even magical perfection (*siddhi*) and autonomy (*svātantrya*). Madeleine Biardeau puts the matter well when she states that the Tantra is the attempt to employ desire (*kāma*) and all the values associated with it at the service of liberation.[126] This attempt results from a general aim of not sacrificing this world to the purposes of salvation, but of reintegrating it somehow to the perspectives of salvation. As Padoux emphasizes, the Tantra still continues the Upaniṣadic search for a salvation that results from an intuitive knowledge, from a unitive fusion with a first principle.

Thirdly, the Tantra establishes a series of correlations between man, the universe, the gods, and the tantric ritual. These correlations or homologies are elaborated in a complex system of symbols that includes the human body with its so-called mystical physiology. In addition, this system of symbols takes on a markedly sexual character abounding in

what Bharati terms "polarity symbolism,"[127] involving descriptions of the "mystical" union of male and female, of Śiva and *śakti*. Much of this symbolism is expressed in a kind of secret or technical language that is deliberately ambiguous, multivalent, and, it seems, intended to shock the prudish or exclude the uninitiated.

Fourthly, there can be little doubt as to the centrality of the *śakti* in all forms of the Hindu Tantra. Padoux calls this the "essential element of the tantric conceptions about the divine and the world."[128] The *śakti* is the cosmically creative force that actually carries out the tasks of creation, maintenance and reabsorption of the universe. In addition, it is that power which is operative in human beings both as a vital force and a spiritual power. On the human level, the *śakti* is present in the body as the *kuṇḍalinī* force.[129] There are numerous practices related to the tantric yoga for the arousal and elevation of the *kuṇḍalinī*, and some of these practices appear in Abhinavagupta's *TĀ*. The Goddess also most often forms the central symbolic element, or, as Bharati terms it, the "shooting target"[130] of much of the ritual that pervades the Tantra.

It is important to underscore the significance of ritual and initiation in Tantrism. Certainly, ritual and initiation were not unknown before the advent of the Tantra. However, in the Tantra we find them at the very center of religious life. Ultimately, the Tantra was something into which one had to be initiated. It was without question an esoteric tradition, closed to all but initiates. Its esoteric nature becomes even more clear in the Kaula Tantra. Not only was the tradition to be entered into by means of a ritual of initiation (*dīkṣā*), but the religious practice or *sādhanā* enjoined on the tantric practitioner was itself highly ritualized. In Abhinavagupta's teachings, this ritual is to be progressively "interiorized." As the practitioner proceeds, he becomes less and less dependent on the external *pūjā* and penetrates deeper and deeper into the direct experience of consciousness. This penetration is often theoretically described as an ascent through the *cakra*-s of the mystical physiology and involves a progressive mastery of the *prāṇic* forces that sustain both the physical body and the mind. Often, this mastery leads to the production and display of supernatural abilities of various sorts, magical powers, or attainments which are also common in many Yoga texts.[131] These can be considered by the tradition as legitimate intermediate goals to be pursued, or even as spontaneous by-products or accompaniments to the attainment of liberation itself.

A central component in all tantric formulations has to do with the power and efficacy of 'speech'.[132] Speech is divided into four progressively more manifest levels. On the most manifest level, the entire Sanskrit alphabet takes on a divine and even cosmic significance. Powerful 'speech acts' composed of *mantra*-s, *bīja*-s, and *vidyā*-s form an important part

of numerous rituals, as well as of internalized, meditative practice. One such *mantra*, the Heart-*mantra*, plays a central role in the tradition, and it will be examined later on in detail.

There are many other characteristics of the Tantra: the use of geometrical designs (*maṇḍala, yantra*); the development of a kind of spiritual geography of places of pilgrimage conceived of as being in the body; and complicated numerical symbolisms. In the final analysis, the most important characteristic is that the tantric practitioner was not so much involved in the formulation of doctrinal systems or schools of thought—although of course, systematization did play a role—as he was intent upon the realization of a particular experience of the freedom, spontaneity, and unboundedness of consciousness. This experience was called by many names in different groups: *sāmarasya*, having one flavor; *yuganaddha*, the principle of union; *sahaja*, spontaneity; *advaya*, non-duality; and *khecarī*, moving in the void. This accounts for what Eliade has called the "markedly experimental character of tantrism."[133] The means for the attainment of this state of realization are myriad. In fact, one of the characteristics of the Tantra is that it employs a kind of teleological justification: *any* means is valid if it will accomplish the goal of taking man to this divinized state. One has only to look, for example, at the *Vijñāna-bhairava-tantra* to see this fluidity and adaptability of means displayed.

It is in this light that we may best understand the tantric use of the forbidden, which includes the deliberate, ritual transgression of rules concerning sexuality, alcohol, eating of meat, and contact with other castes. The secret ritual (*rahasya vidhi*)[134] is not a license to indulge in orgiastic behavior. Rather, it plays upon the homologies between human sexuality and human spirituality. If the goal is a spiritual union with the Goddess, and if the Goddess has somehow come to dwell within a low-caste woman, then sexual union with the woman in a carefully regulated ritual will yield a powerful spiritual result. This result is often conceived in terms of spiritual union with the Goddess, with all that union implies in terms of ascension of *kuṇḍalinī*.

Recent Western nonacademic interest in the Tantra has tended to blur the important distinction between the *tantra-śāstra* and the *kāma-śāstra*.[135] India had a highly developed science of erotics, the *kāma-śāstra*, where the goal was a cultured, refined lovemaking, a perfectly acceptable fulfillment of one of the four legitimate aims of human existence, *puruṣārtha*-s, that of *kāma*.[136] The *tantra-śāstra*, in using the secret ritual, did not seek to fulfill *kāma*, but rather to provide a new path for the attainment of *mokṣa*. This statement may seem obvious, but it needs saying. When we read about those portions of the Kaula ritual that include sexual

terminology,[137] we have to remember that this ritual was often only to be internally visualized. Even in those cases where there was an external acting out of the ritual (and this possibility was open in Abhinavagupta's time only to a select few of the most advanced disciples), the purpose was the awakening of the *kuṇḍalinī*, or, as Abhinavagupta often terms it, the harnessing of the *visarga*, the Emissional Power.

To understand the tantric attitude towards sexuality requires a rather drastic change of perspective. Accustomed as we are by a twentieth-century Freudian mentality to seeing sexuality as the underlying reality or meaning of all sorts and varieties of symbols, we are inclined to say that the Tantra uses sexual symbolism and projects this human symbol onto the larger scale of the universe and its origin. In order to understand the sexual aspect of the tantric "secret" ritual, however, we must first come to view the human dimension as being totally sacralized. From this sacralized perspective, the body and all of its activities are seen as divine. The process of human reproduction can then be celebrated as being itself but a specific instance, example, and even symbol, of the larger and much more important process by which the entire universe manifests from the absolute reality. This grand overflowing of the absolute reality into specific, finite realities is not in itself a sexual process. Rather, by reversing our viewpoint we can see the finite realities of human life as "marked" by the absolute reality. They indelibly belong to that absolute reality by their capacity to replicate, imitate, and participate, on the small individual scale, in the process of divine creativity. This is why the tradition refuses any outright equation between the *liṅga* and the phallus. Such an equation misses the essential point of the icon, that it is a representation of the divinity of Śiva himself, rather than of any specific detail of human anatomy.

For the moment we can say that there is an important sense in which sexuality simply repeats and continues the overflowing of the absolute reality that manifests the entire universe as it emerges from Śiva or from the womb of the Goddess. It is this macrocosmic, creative power that is important to the tantric practitioner, and not the brief and comparatively weak spasm of orgasm. The macrocosmic power known as the Emissional Power is important because if a person is successful in awakening and attuning to it, liberation will result. In this sense, human sexuality becomes a physical metaphor for this blissful, cosmic, creative wave that continuously surges at the core of all things and that may be experienced within the body as the bliss resulting from the awakened *kuṇḍalinī*. Clearly, the purpose of the secret ritual is not conventional orgasm, though this may occur. It is rather the experience of union and unity known as *samatā*, or *sahaja samādhi*. The ritual facilitates the discovery of spiritual awakening and ensures its permanence for the practitioner.

This discussion is motivated not by a spirit of apologetics, but rather by a spirit of precision in scholarship. Much of the denigration of the Tantra has come from a puritanical attitude both in India and in the West that is basically suspicious, and even afraid, of sexuality and the erotic life. Misunderstanding the Tantra to teach a method that allows sexuality to enter into religion by a back door, many have condemned the Tantra. Medieval India was a culture of powerful life-affirming tendencies that pursued, within the boundaries imposed by *dharma*, a vigorous and unabashed sexual life.[138] The point of the Tantra was not to allow a sex-starved culture to express its suppressed desires in a sublimated religious form. Rather, the Tantra was a religious tradition that affirmed the potential experience of the sacredness and divinity of human existence in all its aspects.

Some scholars may argue that there is a similarity between the Tantra wishing to awaken beings to love and union with the God or Goddess by means of a method that employs, as one of its aspects, ritualized sexual contacts, and the aim of the *kāma-śāstra*, of making sexual intercourse as 'divine' as possible. In practice, there is no doubt that certain tantric schools became, with time, little more than institutions in which a sophisticated, complex, and rather esoteric method of lovemaking was taught. Nevertheless, the primary emphasis of the Tantra, especially in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva groups, was the acquisition of a spiritual condition of freedom, a far more exalted goal and attainment.

The psychological sophistication of tantric groups was that they had recognized that the *sources* and *origins* of sexuality and spirituality are identical. It grossly distorts the Tantra to represent it as teaching that sexuality and spirituality are themselves identical. True, the Tantra discovered and employed certain kinds of spiritual methods that involved a consideration of the right use, channeling, conservation, and expression of sexual energies. This is not to say that tantric practices reduce spirituality simply to a kind of sexual hygiene. It is important finally to avoid conceptualizing the tantra exclusively in terms of the secret ritual. It is present in the tradition, but it must be given its proper place.

Much has been said about the "antispeculative" character of the Tantra.[139] If the dimension of experience is finally what is important, there is no doubt that in tantric texts there is a strong streak of contempt or condescension for those who limit themselves to a kind of intellectual jugglery and do not get down to the basic task of experiential replication. As Padoux has rightly argued, we must not simply equate the total content of the Tantra with the ritualistic dimension and the resulting experiential realizations.[140] Abhinavagupta was capable of formulating intricate doctrinal argumentation, and he did so within the larger scheme of an

overarching system of thought. Nevertheless, this philosophical activity stems from his own direct, experiential realization. It was the attempt to use *vikalpa*, dual, polarized thought, as a means of describing the *nirvikalpa*, non-dual consciousness. It is the uniqueness and importance of Abhinavagupta that, while he was a full-fledged tantric with a strong antispeculative streak running through his work, he was not deterred from producing perhaps the most sophisticated and early exposition of the theoretical underpinnings of Hindu tantric practice that has survived to this day.

The Kaula Lineage

In his authoritative study of Yoga, historian of religions Mircea Eliade remarks on a "synthesis" that culminates around the time of Abhinavagupta's life. He notes:

> We see that Sahajīyā tantrism (both Hindu and Buddhist), alchemy (Nāgārjuna, Carpaṭi), Haṭha Yoga (Gorakhnāth), and the Kāpālikas here coincide: their representatives are included in the lists both of the nine Nāthas and of the eighty-four Siddhas. This may perhaps give us the key to the symbolism of the Nāthas and the Siddhas—at a certain period (probably between the seventh and eleventh century), a new "revelation" occurred, formulated by masters who no more claimed to be original than their predecessors had done (were they not "identified" with Śiva or with Vajrasattva?), but who had reinterpreted the timeless doctrines to conform to the needs of their day. One of the essential points of this new "revelation" was that it finally completed the synthesis among the elements of Vajrayāna, and Śivaist tantrism, magic, alchemy, and Haṭha Yoga.[141]

The Kaula lineage is one of the important sources for this synthesis. This little-known tradition, which is not exactly a "school," but rather, in Alper's felicitous phrase, a "preceptorial line,"[142] surely is deserving of close scrutiny. This lineage, which is linked to the Haṭha Yogins, to the Siddha-s, and to the Nātha Yogins, forms one of the important components of that loose amalgam we term the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. Goudriaan comments that the position of the Kula in the early tantric tradition is still unclear.[143] Sanderson has recently shown the distinction in Kashmir between what he calls the Trika Kaula and the more extreme Kāpālika-oriented Krama lineage.[144] The *Parātriṃśikā* verses, which are distinctly Kaula in their content, form the basis for two of Abhinavagupta's most important commentaries. It is in the *PT* verses, which purport to represent the last part of the *Rudra-yāmala-tantra*, that we get the clearest expressions

about the Heart, the central symbol in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva literature. According to the tradition, the Kaula path is linked with the *Śāmbhavopāya*, described in *āhnika* 3 of the *TĀ*. However, this method is not the only means employed by this tradition. In addition, the secret ritual, taught in *āhnika* 29 of the *TĀ*, is said to stem from the *kula-prakriyā*, the *kula*-method. This is the lineage into which Abhinavagupta was initiated by his guru, Śambhunātha.

Scattered throughout Abhinavagupta's writings are many references to the Kaula lineage, as well as technical terms drawn from this tradition. There can be little doubt about the importance of this tradition for an understanding of the work of Abhinavagupta. In addition, the Kaula teachings become important in the wider sphere of the Tantra as well. As Goudriaan notes,

> With the emergence of the "Kula path," which can be proven to have taken place not later than the ninth century and perhaps even goes back to the fifth or fourth century A.D., Tantrism came to develop its probably most characteristic representative, in which the worship and mysticism of the divine Śakti became the most prominent element. (This does, however, not mean that all Kaulas were or are Śāktas).[145]

Since the true historical antecedents of this lineage are simply not accessible, let us sort through the myth of origin of this lineage according to the tradition itself. In the last chapter of the *TĀ*,[146] Abhinavagupta states that two teachers, Lakulīśa and Śrīkaṇṭha, were qualified to teach Shaivism. The first was the founder of the Pāśupata-s. The second teacher gave instructions to three perfected beings, Tryambhaka, Āmardaka, and Śrīnātha, to descend and teach the Shaiva doctrines of non-duality, duality, and combined duality-non-duality, respectively. Tryambhaka's daughter founded a fourth school, named the Third-and-a-Half (*ardhatryambhaka*), which can be identified as the Kaula tradition, which Jayaratha calls the *kula-prakriyā*.[147] In fact, while the Kaula is correctly termed a tantric school, Jayaratha, the twelfth century commentator of the *TĀ*,[148] maintains a distinction between the *kula-prakriyā* and the *tantra-prakriyā*: the first refers to the *ardhatryambhaka* line and the second to the non-dual *tryambhaka* teachings.[149]

While these foundational events seem to have taken place in a kind of *illo tempore*, Abhinavagupta mentions Macchandanātha (Mīnanātha, Macchanda Vibhu, Matsyendranātha) as the founder of the Kaula tradition in the *kali* Age.[150] Bagchi notes that, strictly speaking, Macchandanātha founded one of the Kaula schools known as the Yoginī Kaula of Kāmarupa.[151] This accords with Jayaratha's assertion that he lived in Kāmarupa

(Assam).[152] Jayaratha tells us that Macchandanātha was married and had six sons.

Each of these sons founded a *saṃtāna*, a spiritual family, or stream of knowledge (*jñāna pravāha*). These are known by the technical name of *ovallī*-s, and each *ovallī* had assigned to it a particular initiatory name, a special hand gesture (*mudrā*), a specific body *cakra* where meditation would be practiced (*chummā*), a place where they lived (*ghara*), took alms (*pallī*), and a special locale where they attained enlightenment (*pīṭha*).[153]

Closer to the time of Abhinavagupta is Sumati, perhaps the first historical teacher of the school, who is said to have lived in the South. Sumati was the teacher of Somadeva, who in turn was the teacher of Śambhunātha, who taught the Kaula practices to Abhinavagupta in Jālandhara (in the Punjab). Pandey[154] interprets a reference in Jayaratha's comment to the *TĀ*[155] as meaning that Kallaṭa wrote a work on the Kaula system, but the evidence is a bit thin. Perhaps Abhinavagupta was not the first of the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas to import the Kaula teachings.

Literature of the Kaula

Pandey gives us a summary of the literature of the Kaulas. Before examining the texts that he mentions, we should note that the Kaula's extreme emphasis on experiential replication (*hṛdayaṅgamībhūta*) caused a situation in which they would tend not to value as highly the production of texts, but instead placed emphasis on initiation and practice. Nevertheless, there were some texts associated with the tradition, although we know of many of these only by reference to them in other texts.

Pandey summarizes the literature of the school as follows:[156]

1. *Siddha-yogeśvarī-mata-tantra.* This *tantra* is said to have been very long. Consequently, it was summarized into three successively shorter texts. The first summary is the *Mālinī-vijaya* and the last is the *Mālinī-vijayottara.* As the most succinct text, this last is an essential Kaula work and was considered extremely authoritative by Abhinavagupta.
2. *Rudra-yāmala-tantra.* The only extant portion of this text is the *Parā-triṃśikā.* We have already mentioned the doubts some scholars have as to the precise identity of this text.
3. *Kulārṇava-tantra.* A more popular text on the Kaula teachings. It contains numerous later interpolations.
4. *Jñānārṇava.* This text is also known as the *Nityā-tantra.*
5. *Nityā-ṣoḍaśika-arṇava.* This is sometimes called the *Vāmakeśvara-tantra.* Not published in the KSTS edition, but sometimes considered

a sort of esoterical addition to the *NṢA/VMT* is the *Nityā-hṛdaya* or the *Yoginī-hṛdaya*, which is actually a separate text.[157]

6. *Svacchanda-tantra.* This important and long *tantra* is listed because of its *kaulika* tendencies. Padoux disagrees with Pandey and says he would not call the *SvT* a Kaula text.
7. *Netra-tantra.* This important *tantra* also shows *kaulika* tendencies.
8. *Tantrarāja-tantra.* This is a rather late *tantra*, which is Kaula in the sense that it is a Śrīvidyā text.
9. *Kālīkula.* This is a semi-*āgamic* text which lists the names of the teachers of the tradition along with their wives.

In addition, Silburn cites the following texts, which she says are frequently quoted by Maheśvarānanda: *Triśiro-bhairava, Ratna-mālā, Kālīkula, Kula-gahvara, Kula-mūlāvatāra, Kula-kamala*, and the *Ṛju-vimarśinī*, a gloss on the *Nityā-ṣoḍaśika-arṇava-tantra.*[158]

Here again, Abhinavagupta's writings are of extreme importance in reclaiming the essential meanings of the *Kaula* lineage which we will now consider.

Meaning of the Kaula Lineage

In general, the important doctrines of the Kaulas relevant to our consideration of the *PTlv* may be summarized under three essential categories: the effortless, "bodily" method, the group practice, and the mysticism of phonemes. Each of these three areas can be understood as exemplifying a particular meaning of the term *kula.*[159]

The first category has to do with the method of realization that involves an effortless plunge into consciousness. Among other things, the Kaula tradition teaches the method known as the *Śāmbhavopāya*, the method (*upāya*) that relates to Śambhu, that is the Lord Śiva. This method has as its basic component the direct and immediate acquisition of the state of *nirvikalpa*. Thus this method is reserved for very advanced practitioners. The *nirvikalpa*, or non-dual condition, may arise spontaneously as a result of a powerful *śaktipāta*—descent of energy. This unmediated *nirvikalpa* consists very simply of a doubling back of consciousness upon itself. Thus, this method borders on an effortless nonmethod, in which there is very little if any "doing" on the part of the practitioner. If the practitioner is not favored by a sufficiently powerful *śaktipāta*, then he must begin with one of the less advanced methods and work his way up to it. The essential tool in all cases seems to be the *mantra*, which provokes an entrance or absorption into the depths of the mind.

While the term *kula* and its related adjectival forms lend themselves to a considerable variety of meanings, all of which are played upon skillfully in the tradition (Pandey lists some twenty-two meanings of the term, drawn from different texts),[160] nonetheless, the basic meaning from which all the other usages are generated is "group." The essential idea is that when the absolute reality of Śiva manifests itself, the variety of manifest reality forms a coherent group held together by the presence within it of the underlying unity of Śiva. This manifest reality can be called the *kula*, and, in contradistinction, Śiva is often termed *a-kula*. Similarly, each smaller unit of manifest reality—a universe, a world, a family, an individual person (a body)—can be termed a *kula*, because it is a conglomeration of disparate objects, beings, and organs held together by an overarching unity. Because of the presence of Śiva within each of these units, each part in some sense contains all the other parts.[161] There is a kind of self-sufficiency or autonomy built into each unit of manifestation. Although each unit may take on a specific form that separates it from the other manifested realities, it is not really separate from those different realities. Each manifested unit of reality is essentially a contraction (*saṃkoca*) of the totality, while simultaneously the whole, due to its freedom, remains uncontracted. This kind of holistic vision accounts for much of the perplexing ease with which the tradition slides between many different levels (such as the human, the cosmic, the ritual, the bodily) that present the observer with an apparently contradictory disparateness.

This complex baggage of meaning borne by the term *kula* presents a problem for its translation as well as the translation of its related forms, *kaula, kaulinī, kaulika,* and *kaulikī.* Clearly, the term *group* simply does not generate the rich resonance and wide range of applicability that is intended by *kula.* We may posit as a primary translation something like "Embodied Cosmos." It is clear that the Kaula tradition teaches the primary importance of the body as the essential tool of *sādhanā.* In an important sense, following the logic just outlined, the Cosmos *is* the body. Philip Rawson notes that

> according to this principle Tantra equates the human body with the cosmos. The two are, so to speak, the same functional system seen from two different points of view, and each is inconceivable without the other. The cosmos which man's mind knows, is a structure of the energy currents in his bodily system.[162]

Similarly, Abhinavagupta comments:

> Thus the body should be seen as full of all the paths, filled with the varied operations of time, and seat of all the movements of time and of space. The body seen in this way is in itself, composed of all the divinities, and thus must

> be made an object of contemplation, of adoration and of the rites of fulfillment. He who penetrates in the body achieves liberation.[163]

He continues by saying that, "the *mantra* is the instrument by which one comes to perceive the divinities within the body."[164] Thus the body, like the cosmos, can be seen as a separate unit of manifestation, which is composed of many different parts, all of which are interrelated by the presence of the divine within it.

The basic method of the Kaula lineage is the experience of the freedom of consciousness. This freedom has its paradoxical location in the Heart, where the infinite somehow comes to reside within the bodily structures, which are finite. The Kaula method is a form of bodily enlightenment in which the *sādhaka* must master the powerful forces of the subtle yogic body, the divinities that reside within. It is from this perspective that we can understand why the so-called *kaulikī śakti*, which roughly means the power of the Embodied Cosmos, is at once a bodily energy (the *kuṇḍalinī*), and at the same time a cosmic force.

The Kaula lineage neither reviles nor tortures the body to achieve enlightenment. Rather, the tradition worships the body as a vessel of the Supreme. Indeed, the central tool for enlightenment is the body.

A further aspect of this process of bodily enlightenment is related to notions quite similar to those of the Nātha Siddhas. Consciousness must first be liberated on its own level, which is to say that the contractions that bind consciousness must be released for it to enter the non-dual *nirvikalpa* state. This process is talked about in terms of an absorption in the Heart. At this point the state of freedom, which is the essential nature of consciousness, must be made to overflow. The outward flowing of freedom from the Heart results in a transformation of the sensory capacities. The channels of the senses, which until now functioned to bring limited information to the mind, can now be widened and can bring the infinite to the level of sensory experience. This is an initial aspect of the unitive vision, or the extrovertive *samādhi*. We get hints in the *PTlv* of a further stage of this process in which the finite body is divinized and immortalized. The *siddha* who inhabits the body becomes like a God. The self-experience at this exalted level is that the cosmos has become one's body. The *siddha* is no longer bound by the finite, physical body, but has appropriated and brought under control the entire *kula*, that is, the entire, manifest reality.

The importance and centrality of this term and of the lineage which it names cannot be underestimated as a basic source for the development of the entire tantric tradition. The term *kula*, starting from a basic meaning of group, comes to mean the Embodied Cosmos, which encompasses the

entire range of the manifest reality. In addition, this meaning of "group" leads to the notion of the spiritual family which practices the "bodily" methods leading to enlightenment.

The meaning of "group" as family leads us into the second significant area which characterizes the Kaula tradition, namely the concept of a group practice in which the group is an initiated and restricted in-group. This group comes to constitute a kind of spiritual family in which the *guru* functions as the spiritual father and the *guru*'s wife plays the role of mother. Abhinavagupta refers to this concept of the spiritual family (*saṃtāna*) in the *TĀ*.

> because the notions of 'self' and 'other' are equally imaginary, howsoever many become united with the teacher, he forms a single self with all of them and, as such, is called "perfected one" (*siddha*) and "liberated one."[165]

Abhinavagupta continues:

> The group that is constituted by the teacher, the teacher's wife, the brothers, and sons is not generated by a connection of blood, but rather a connection of consciousness.[166]

This larger consciousness-group is experienced during the group ritual. In a revealing passage Abhinavagupta says:

> Consciousness, which is composed of all things, enters into a state of contraction due to the differences generated by separate bodies, but it returns to a state of oneness, to a state of expansion, when all of its components are able to reflect back on each other. The totality of our own rays of consciousness are reflected back one on the other when, overflowing in the individual consciousness of all present as if in so many mirrors, and without any effort whatsoever in an intense fashion, it becomes universal. For this reason, when a group of people gather together during the performance of a dance or of song, etc., there will be true enjoyment when they are concentrated and immersed in the spectacle all together and not one by one. Consciousness which is overflowing with bliss, even when considered individually, attains in these spectacles a state of unity and, because of that, a state of full and perfect blissfulness. The absence of causes of contraction such as jealousy, hate, etc., allows consciousness in such moments fully to expand without obstacles in a fullness of bliss, but if even one of those present is not concentrated and absorbed, then consciousness remains offended as at the touch of a surface full of depressions and protuberances because he stands out there as a heterogeneous element. This is the reason why during the rites of adoration of the circle (*cakra*) one must remain attentive and not allow anyone to enter whose consciousness is in a dispersed state and not concentrated

> and absorbed, because he will be a source of contraction. In the practice of the circle (*cakra*) one must adore all the bodies of all those present because since they have all penetrated in the fullness of consciousness they are in reality as if they were our own body. If through some negligence a stranger succeeds in entering, the initiated ritual may proceed together with him provided that he does not enter in a state of contraction. Such a one, if divine grace falls upon him, will become concentrated and absorbed with the various rituals, but if he is struck by a sinister and malevolent power of the Lord, he will criticize the group.[167]

This remarkable and intriguing analysis provides an inside look at the workings of the group rituals that are at the heart of the Tantric practice. A sexual aspect is certainly present in the Kaula tradition taught by Abhinavagupta, and later schools place great emphasis on the sexual aspect of these rituals. There are references throughout the Kashmir Shaiva tantric texts to the *yoginī*-s, to the *nāyikā*-s, and to the *dūtī*-s, various names for the hypostatization of the Goddess in the human female who functions as a partner during these rituals. In the above passage, however, it is clear that the ultimate purpose of these group practices is the expansion of consciousness to its fullest possible extent.

Abhinavagupta makes explicit reference to the practice of the *kula-cakra*, also known as the *kula-yāga*, in chapter 29 of the *TĀ*. His teachings there are purported to be based on chapter 19 of the *MVT.* Even here Abhinavagupta's teachings deal as much with the internal states generated by the practices as they do with the external level of the ritual. In reading chapter 29 of the *TĀ*, it is often difficult to determine what specific level is being referred to. In many instances, Abhinavagupta is clearly teaching on many levels at the same time. There seems to be a deliberate ambiguity to his teachings about the Kaula practices.[168]

Another important aspect of the teaching of the Kaula tradition has to do with what might be termed a phoneme mysticism, and even more precisely, a vowel mysticism. This aspect of the Kaula tradition is treated in chapter 3 of the *TĀ*, and is in great detail in the *PTv*, as well as being summarized in the *PTlv*. The sixteen vowels, which include the *bindu*, the "point," and the *visarga*, the Emissional Power, function as symbols for different aspects of the power of the Lord.[169] Using the vowels to name different aspects of the totality generates a description that plays on certain grammatical formulations of the Sanskrit as well as on graphic elements of their representation in *devanāgarī* or *śārada* script, in order to make statements about the totality. The totality manifests itself into different finite parts and this is accomplished by the *śakti* of Śiva, his power that is always to be considered as not different from Śiva himself.[170] Indeed, the finite parts contain within them the infinity of Śiva. In addition, each

vowel, and in fact each consonant as well, corresponds to one of the *tattva*-s. There is a complicated analysis in the *PTv*[171] in which each *tattva* implicitly contains within it all the other *tattva*-s. This notion of unity offers a vision of the totality within each individual object of perception. Of the vowels, two of them stand as having the most powerful religious connotations namely the first vowel, *A*, known as the Ultimate (*anuttara*), and the last vowel, *Ḥ*, the *visarga*. It is significant that in chapter 3 of the *TĀ* when Abhinavagupta explains the *Śāmbhavopāya*, he spends the greater part of the chapter explaining the symbolism contained in the phonemes. Perhaps given the effortlessness of the method involved, it is difficult to explain and must indeed simply be learned and practiced in order to be understood. The symbolism of the phonemes is also important because these phonemes are the building blocks out of which the *mantra*-s are structured. Consequently, in describing the phonemes on a kind of cosmic plane, Abhinavagupta reveals the meanings that are contained in the *mantra*-s structured from these phonemes. It is especially in the *PTlv* that Abhinavagupta reveals his teachings of the essential tool of the effortless method, the *mantra*. We shall now begin our examination of the symbol of the Heart.

CHAPTER 3

The Symbol of the Heart in India Prior to Abhinavagupta

Veda, Upaniṣad-s, Yoga Texts

There is little question regarding the antiquity of the Heart as a religious symbol in India. This chapter will review briefly the history of this symbol beginning with its appearance in the Vedic *Saṃhitā*-s. While such a cursory examination cannot do full justice to the concept of the Heart prior to Abhinavagupta, this textual review will essentially serve to introduce the symbol of the Heart, and to lead us into its appearance in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva texts. The richness of the symbol even in these early environments is profound. The primary focus of the study must be maintained: Abhinavagupta's conception of the Heart.

Before we look at these early environments of the symbol, it is important to state that we are entering a different system of mind-body terms from that which we are acquainted with. The Heart here finally becomes quite simply a metaphor for consciousness. The Heart as it will be examined in these pages has nothing whatsoever to do with conceptions of romantic love, the emotions, eros, the sacred heart of Jesus and so on.

In a different vein, it is also important to state at the outset that the Heart as a pan-Indian symbol never attains the prominence of other, more important symbols. The purpose of this chapter is not to artificially elevate the Heart to a status it never had, but simply to trace the development of the symbol as it surfaces here and there in Indian thought in preparation for examining it in the one religious context where it does achieve some measure of importance.

The problem of the dates for the Vedic materials has been repeatedly discussed.[1] If we accept an approximate estimate of 1500 B.C.E. for the *Ṛg Veda*, however, we realize that chronologically Abhinavagupta is closer to us than he was to his Vedic predecessors. Yet, after examining these early occurrences of the Heart, one cannot help being struck by the similarities of meaning that emerge when these early conceptions about the Heart are juxtaposed with those of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition.

A historical sketch of the symbol of the Heart must begin with the *Veda*. In an excellent study, the great Dutch Indologist Jan Gonda has studied the concept of vision (*dhīḥ*) in the *Ṛg Veda*. As part of his task, he examined the concept of the Heart because it "fulfills an important function in the transmission and conversion of the 'visions'."[2] Gonda's discussion serves as an excellent introduction to the Heart in Abhinavagupta's thought. In addition, it will also aid us in examining some of the history of the symbol.

The Vedic terms for Heart, *hṛd* and *hṛdaya*, occur close to a hundred times in the *Ṛg Veda*.[3] In summarizing these occurrences, Gonda notes that:

1. "the heart is the organ with which one is able to see what is denied to the physical eye."[4]
2. "the heart is the organ by means of which one comes into touch with the Gods."[5]
3. "It is the heart which enables a human being to penetrate into deep secrets and mysteries."[6]
4. "It is in or by the heart that visions are fashioned into words."[7]
5. "The process which the visions undergo in the heart is . . . explicitly described as a purification or clarification."[8]
6. "The soma juices which are drunk by the officiants are believed to be in their 'hearts'."[9]
7. "By finding, with or in the heart, the light of higher insight and contact with the transcendent one becomes an all-seeing *ṛṣi*."[10]
8. "The inspired seers who are characterized by 'vision' (*dhīḥ*) watch or conceal, or what is most probable, pay heed to the god who is not subject to decay with (in) their heart."[11]
9. "The 'clarified butter' (*ghṛta*) of the liturgical word which the gods produce from the seer flow from the ocean in the heart."[12]
10. "The liturgical words of the poets are on the other hand repeatedly said to come to the heart of a god and are expected to stay there. The hymn of praise is hence described as *hṛdispṛj*—'touching (the god's) heart'."[13]
11. " . . . The repeated communication that the poet bears the *soma* in his heart."[14]

12. "It is expedient to remember that the terms denoting [the Heart], in the ancient languages were not used with any anatomical precision. Words for 'heart' or their derivatives were on the one hand frequently used also for 'middle or centre' and even for the 'bowels', and on the other hand, employed to denote a variety of emotions the seat of which was thought to be 'in the heart'."[15]

This summary of Gonda's findings on the Heart in the *Ṛg Veda* is important because it allows us to recognize the authenticity and, in fact, the archaic nature of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva meanings of the Heart. At the same time, we shall see that the Shaiva tradition gives the Heart its own unique and particular inflection.

Let us examine a few specific passages from the *Ṛg Veda*, in the light of Gonda's summary (*RV* 10.129.4):

> Desire came upon that one in the beginning; that was the first seed of mind. Seers seeking in their heart with wisdom found the bond of existence in non-existence.[16]

This verse from a famous cosmogonic hymn underscores the importance of the Heart in the search for ultimate knowledge. Moreover, it seems clear that the Heart functions as an important cosmological locale: it is in the Heart that existence and nonexistence are linked. Another important place occurs in *RV* 9.72.7:

> The supporter of the vast heaven (placed) upon the navel of the earth, moistened amongst the rivers in the wave of the waters, the thunderbolt of Indra, the showerer (of benefits), the possessor of wealth, Soma, auspiciously exhilarating, distils into (Indra's) heart.[17]

This verse from the ninth *Maṇḍala* emphasizes the importance of the *soma*, as it trickles into the Heart of Indra. We shall see that the Heart is the abode of immortality as well as being the ocean of consciousness. The liquidity of the *soma* will be interpreted by the Shaiva tradition as part of the fluidity of consciousness. This same underlying image of liquidity in the Heart pervades the following verse (*RV* 4.58.5-6, 11):

> These streams of butter flow from the ocean of the heart . . . our words flow together like rivers, made clear by understanding deep within the heart . . . the whole universe is set in your essence within the ocean, within the heart, in the life-span. Let us win your honeyed wave that is brought to the face of the waters as they flow together.[18]

This passage seems to prefigure the notion of a power in the Heart which supports the entire universe. Also, in this and the following verse, we see the purificatory, and perhaps even salvational, effect of the *soma* that is tasted in the Heart (*RV* 1.179.5):

> By this Soma which I have drunk, in the innermost heart I say: Let him forgive us if we have sinned, for a mortal is full of many desires.[19]

A first inkling that this power in the Heart undergoes a process of deification occurs with a passage which asserts (*RV* 9.4.6-8):

> Soma the protector of the sacrifice, the doer of good deeds cannot be resisted; he places in his heart the three purifiers, he the all-wise looks over all worlds.[20]

The general tenor of these passages is clear: already in the *Ṛg Veda*, the Heart is linked with visions, with the *soma*, with the ocean, with the Gods, with purification, with light, and with secrets and mysteries.

An important transition towards the Upaniṣadic usage of the Heart occurs in the *Atharva Veda* (10.7) in a mystical verse which teaches the secret of *skambha*, the world support or pillar, and which is known by those who know the *brahman* within the heart.[21]

Referring to the *Mahā Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, the French scholar Jean Varenne has said:

> Le coeur tient un place importante dans notre texte qui, par là, se situe dans la ligne des principales Upaniṣads. . . . Le coeur . . . est à la fois un organe et une fonction ou, si l'on préfère, un lieu (la caverne secrèt) et une activité (l'intuition). . . . La présentation du coeur comme demeure de l'Âme (individuelle et cosmique, ātman et brahman) est, si l'on peut dire, un lieu commun dans ce type de texte. . . . Le second aspect du mot *hṛd-* . . . ne peut manquer d'évoquer certaines pratiques du yoga: celles qui conduisent l'adepte à "voir" son Âme dans le feu qui illumine la caverne du coeur.[22]

While this analysis refers specifically to a single and rather late *Upaniṣad*, it does serve as an excellent summary of the developments in that class of texts. In the *Upaniṣad*-s, we begin to read about the space within the Heart (*BĀU* 2.1.17-19).[23] One of the earliest of these texts, the *Bṛhad Āraṇyaka*, transcribes the teachings of Yajñavalkya, who declares that all sensory perceptions are gathered and united in the Heart and that it is in the Heart that one is said to rest during sleep (*BĀU* 2.4.11).[24] Later in the same text the space in the Heart forms the basis of the divinities found in all five directions (*BĀU* 3.9.19-25). Further on, it is identified with *brahman*. We read (*BĀU* 4.1.7):

> Brahman is the Heart. . . . The Heart is the seat of all things. The Heart is the support (*pratiṣṭhā*) of all things, for on the Heart alone all things are established. The highest brahman is the Heart. The Heart does not leave him who, knowing this, worships it as such. All things run unto him. He, becoming a God, goes to the gods.[25]

The teacher Yājñavalkya then identifies the person (*puruṣa*) in the Heart (*BĀU* 4.2.3; 4.3.7):

> Indha by name is this person here in the right eye. Now that which has the form of a person in the left eye is his wife, Virāj. Their meeting-place is the space within the Heart. Their food is the red lump in the heart. Their covering is the net-like work in the heart. The path that they go is that channel which goes upward from the heart. Like a hair divided a thousandfold, so are the channels called *hitā*, which are established within the heart.[26] Which is the soul? The person here who among the senses is made of knowledge, who is the light in the heart.[27]

Just as the impulses of perception are gathered up in the heart at the time of sleep, so are they also as death approaches (*BĀU* 4.4.1-2):

> When this self comes to weakness and to confusedness of mind, as it were, then the breaths gather around him. He takes to himself those particles of energy and descends into the heart. When the person in the eye turns away, back, then one becomes non-knowing of forms. . . . He is becoming one, they say, he does not know. The point of his heart becomes lighted up. By that light the self departs, either by the eye, or by the head, or by other bodily parts.[28]

In addition, the Heart is equated with Prajāpati, with *brahman*, with the All. Emphasis is also placed on the three syllables of the term *hṛdayam* (*BĀU* 5.3.1).[29] A final statement in this text summarizes the teaching (*BĀU* 5.6.1):

> This person (*puruṣa*) here in the heart is made of mind, is of the nature of light, is like a little grain of rice, is a grain of barley. This very one is ruler of everything, is lord of everything, governs this whole universe, whatsoever there is.[30]

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, also a very early text, tells us (*ChU* 3.12.4, 7-9):

> Verily, what the body in man is, that is the same as what the heart within man here is; for on it these vital breaths are established. They do not extend beyond it.[31] Verily, what is called brahman—that is the same as what the space outside of a person is. Verily, what the space outside of a person is—that is the same as what the space within a person is—that is the same as what the space here

within the heart is. That is the Full, the Non-active. Full, non-active prosperity he obtains who knows this.[32]

Further on, the Heart is said to have five openings for the gods,[33] and these gods seem to correspond to the five vital breaths (*ChU* 3.13.1). We once again find an all-encompassing description of the Heart (*ChU* 3.14.2-3):

He who consists of mind, whose body is life (*prāṇa*), whose form is light, whose conception is truth, whose soul (*ātman*) is space, containing all works, containing all desires, containing all odors, containing all tastes, encompassing this whole world, the unspeaking, the unconcerned—this soul of mine within the Heart is smaller than a grain of rice, or a barley corn, or a mustard-seed, or a grain of millet, or the kernel of a grain of millet; this soul of mine within the heart is greater than the earth, greater than the atmosphere, greater than the sky, greater than these worlds . . . this is the soul of mine within the heart, this is brahman. Into him I shall enter upon departing hence.[34]

Another relevant and famous passage discusses the "city of *brahman*" (*ChU* 8.1.1-4):

Now, what is here in the city of *brahman*, is an abode, a small lotus flower. Within that is a small space. What is within that should be searched out; that, assuredly, is what one should desire to understand . . . as far, verily, as this world-space extends, so far extends the space within the heart. Within it, indeed, are contained both heaven and earth, both fire and wind, both sun and moon, lightning and the stars, both what one possesses here and what one does not possess; everything here is contained within it . . . that does not grow old with one's old age; it is not slain with one's murder. That is the real city of *brahman*. In it desires are contained. That is the Soul (*ātman*), free from evil, ageless, deathless, sorrowless, hungerless, thirstless, whose desire is the Real, whose conception is the Real.[35]

References to the Heart in these passages show how closely bound the Heart is to one of the central teachings of the *Upaniṣad*-s—namely, the teaching of the *ātman*.

In surveying these passages from two of the earliest *Upaniṣad*-s, we see that the Heart, or the space within the Heart, occupies an important niche. The precise nature of this niche within the symbolic matrix of the Upaniṣadic teachings remains, as with so many of the Upaniṣadic concepts, difficult to identify precisely. As the physical abode of the *ātman*, the Heart functions as the center of human existence. The immortal consciousness, which is also the essence of all external existence, is located in the Heart. The goal of the Upaniṣadic teachings is the universal reality in the Heart. It is that which must be known in order to gain salvation.

In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (6.6-9) we encounter an important new dimension in the teaching about the Heart. This text mentions the Heart not only as the abode of the *ātman*, but also as the instrument by which the *ātman* comes to be known. In a well-known passage from this *Upaniṣad*, the senses, mind, true being, intellect, the unmanifest and the *puruṣa* are compared, and each is set on a respectively higher level.[36] We are told that the *puruṣa*, which is all-pervading and without any distinctive mark, confers liberation and immortality when known. The text continues:

His form (*rūpa*) is not to be beheld

No one soever sees him with the eye.

He is framed by the Heart, by thought, by the mind.

They who know that become immortal.[37]

A similar and perhaps even clearer statement in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (4.17) points out the nature of the Heart: it is the place where the *ātman* resides as well as the instrument by which reality comes to be known.

> That god, the All-Worker, the Great Soul (*mahātman*) ever seated in the Heart of creatures, is framed by the Heart, by the thought, by the mind. They who know that become immortal.[38]

Significantly, in this passage we encounter the God (*deva*) who is the Great Soul placed in the Heart, whereas in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* we find reference to the more impersonal universal Self. At the end of the *Kaṭha* (6.16-17) a final statement appears which is designed to bring the inquiring Naciketas to salvation.

> There are a hundred and one channels of the Heart. One of these passes up to the crown of the head. Going up by it, one goes to immortality. The others are for departing in various directions. A person of the measure of a thumb is the inner soul (*antarātman*) ever seated in the heart of creatures.[39]

A similar statement occurs in the *Śvetāśvatara* (3.20):

> More minute than the minute, greater than the great is the Soul *ātman* that is set in the heart of creatures here.[40]

The *Taittirīya* (1.6.1) adds:

> This space that is within the Heart—therein is the person, consisting of mind, immortal, resplendent.[41]

It is in the *Muṇḍaka* (2.2.8) that we first hear about the knot of the Heart (*hṛdaya-granthi*). This is the knot which must be loosened in order to achieve salvation:

> The knot of the Heart is loosened, all doubts are cut off, and one's deeds cease when he is seen—both the higher and the lower.[42]

Finally, several powerful passages occur in the *Maitrī* that identify the limitless *brahman* with the unlimited and unborn *ātman*. We are told that (6.18):

> His is that shining form which gives heat in yonder sun and which is the brilliant light in a smokeless fire, as also the fire in the stomach which cooks food. For thus it has been said: he who is in the fire, and he who is here in the Heart, and he who is yonder in the sun—he is One.[43]

In the *Maitrī* we also encounter several of Śiva's names applied to the *ātman* within the Heart (7.5):

> He, truly, indeed, is the Self (*ātman*) within the heart, very subtle, kindled like fire, assuming all forms. This whole world is his food. On Him creatures here are woven. He is the Self, which is free from evil, ageless, deathless, sorrowless, free from uncertainty, free from fetters, whose conception is real, whose desire is real. He is the Supreme Lord. He is the ruler of beings. He is the protector of beings. This Soul, assuredly, indeed, is *Īśāna, Śambhu, Bhava, Rudra*.[44]

The *Maitrī* also contains a decidedly yogic passage which teaches a meditation by means of which one may reach the nonsound *brahman* by means of the sound (*brahman*) (6.22):

> By closing the ears with the thumbs, they hear the sound of the space within the heart. Of it there is this sevenfold comparison: like rivers, a bell, a brazen vessel, a wheel, the croaking of frogs, rain, as when one speaks in a sheltered place. Passing beyond this variously characterized (sound-*brahman*), men disappear in the supreme, the non-sound, the unmanifested *brahman*. There they are unqualified, indistinguishable, like the various juices which have reached the condition of honey.[45]

Further on in the same text the yogic processes are discussed in terms of heat and light (6.26):

> Now, it has elsewhere been said: "Assuredly, this is the heat of *brahman*, the supreme, the immortal, the bodiless—even the warmth of the body." For that

(heat) this (body) is the melted butter (*ghee*). Now, although it (i.e., the heat) is manifest, verily it is hidden in the ether (*nabhas*) (of the heart). Therefore by intense concentration they so disperse the space in the heart that the light, as it were, of that (heat) appears. Thereupon one passes speedily into the same condition (of light), as a lump of iron that is hidden in the earth passes speedily into the condition of earthiness. As fire, ironworkers, and the like do not overcome a lump of iron that is in the condition of clay, so (in Yoga) thought together with its support vanishes away. For thus it has been said:

The ether-storehouse of the Heart is bliss, is the supreme abode! This is ourself, our Yoga too; and this, the heat of fire and sun.[46]

These various doctrines have been summarized and fitted into a coherent teaching about the Heart in another text, the *Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad*, where we read (13.6-12):

One should meditate upon the Supreme—the limitless, unchanging, all-knowing, cause of the happiness of the world, dwelling in the sea of one's own heart, as the goal of all striving. The place for His meditation is the ether in the heart, the heart which is comparable to an inverted lotus bud.

It should be known that the heart which is located just at the distance of a finger span below the Adam's apple and above the navel is the great abode of the universe.

Like the bud of a lotus, suspends in an inverted position, the heart surrounded by arteries. In it there is a narrow space called the *suṣumnā*. In it everything is supported.

In the middle of that (narrow space of the heart or *suṣumnā*) remains the undecaying, all-knowing, omnifaced, great Fire, which has flames on every side, which enjoys the food presented before it, which remains assimilating the food consumed, (the rays of which spread scattering themselves vertically and horizontally,) and which warms its own body from the insole to the crown. In the centre of that Fire which permeates the whole body, there abides a tongue of fire, of the color of shining gold, which is the topmost among the subtle, which is dazzling like the flash of lightning that appears in the middle of a rain-bearing cloud, which is as slender as the awn of a paddy grain; and which serves as a comparison to illustrate subtlety.

Paramātman dwells in the middle of that flame. (Although He is thus limited) still He is the four faced creator, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Indra, the material and efficient cause of the universe and the Supreme Self-luminous Pure Consciousness.[47]

From this brief examination of the Heart in these early texts, we can see that a fairly coherent description of the reality of the Heart had already evolved in the Upaniṣadic corpus. We repeatedly hear about the Heart in terms of an unbounded space, fire, the sea, immortality, nectar, the lotus bud, mystical sounds, bliss, and consciousness. This description

is modified and rearranged in the subsequent centuries but does not substantially change. We have seen that the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition considers as authoritative a series of *āgamic* texts that form a distinct tradition of their own. Nevertheless, we can surmise that passages like the above from the Vedic and Upaniṣadic texts may have contributed to the development of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva understanding of the reality of the Heart.

While the Heart plays an important role in the Upaniṣadic doctrine of the *ātman*, the notion of the *ātman* is by far a more developed concept. Similarly, our examination of the Vedic environment shows that the Heart does not hold anywhere as important a place in those texts as do *Soma* and *Agni*, with which it is linked. When we turn to examine the Heart in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition, however, we shall see that the symbol has been elevated to a place of central importance. It becomes a symbol for the Ultimate itself.

That a doctrine of the Heart was well established rather early on in India can be determined by the cursory references to it in later texts such as the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the *Yoga-sūtra*. These later authors seem to take for granted that their audience would be well acquainted with the Heart, for they do not elaborate on the concept. For example, in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa says (15.15): "I make my dwelling in the Heart of all."[48] And (18.61):

> In the region of the heart of all contingent being dwells the Lord, twirling them hither and thither by his uncanny power (like puppets) mounted on a machine.[49]

There is a similarly brief reference to the Heart in the *Yoga-Sūtra* (3.34):

> By practicing *saṃyama* on the heart, knowledge of the mind is acquired. (Comment): The citadel of *brahman* (the heart), shaped like a lotus with a small aperture in it, is the seat of knowledge. By *saṃyama* on this, perception of *citta* arises.[50]

In addition to the above passage, Vyāsa, in his *Bhāṣya*, is equally brief, and merely mentions the lotus of the Heart in his commentary on the *Yoga-sūtra* (1.36). There he says that contemplation practiced in the Heart will bring about consciousness of the *buddhi*, which is shining and like the open space (*ākāśa*).[51] It is necessary to go to Vācaspatimiśra's subcommentary to this same *sūtra* to encounter the most detailed description of the Heart in this text-group. Here is a summary of this description:

> It has eight petals, and it is situated, head downward, between the abdomen

> and the thorax; the yogin must turn it head upward by stopping his breath (*recaka*) and concentrating his intellect (*citta*) on it. In the center of the lotus is the solar disk with the letter A, and here is the seat of the waking state. Above it is the lunar disk with the letter U; this is the seat of sleep. Higher again is the circle of fire with the letter M—the seat of deep sleep. Above all these is the highest circle whose essence is air; this is the seat of the fourth state (*turīya*). In this last lotus, or more precisely in its pericarp, is the "nerve (*nāḍī*) of *Brahmā*" oriented upward and reaching to the circle of the sun and other circles. At this point begins the *nāḍī* named *suṣumṇā*, which also crosses the outer circles. This is the seat of the *citta;* by concentrating on it, the yogin acquires consciousness of the *citta* (in other words, *he becomes conscious of consciousness*).[52]

In his commentary to 3.1, Vyāsa briefly mentions the lotus of the Heart as one of the possible locales in which to practice concentration (*dhāraṇā*):

> *Dhāraṇā* consists in holding or fixing the mind on the navel circle, or on the lotus of the heart, or on the effulgent center of the head, or on the tip of the nose or of the tongue, or on such like spots in the body, or on any external object, by means of the modifications of the mind.[53]

Another interesting reference that echoes much of what appears in the *Upaniṣad*-s occurs in the *Brahma-sūtra:*

> (When the soul of the man who has realized the qualified *brahman* is about to depart), there occurs an illumination of the top of the heart. Having that door illumined by that light, the soul, under the favor of Him who resides in the heart, departs through the hundred and first nerve, owing to the efficacy of the knowledge and the appropriateness of constant thought about the course which is a part of that knowledge.[54]

In his *Bhāṣya* on this passage, Śaṅkara assumes that the reader is familiar with the concept of the Heart and does no more than refer in passing to some of the same references that have been quoted above from the *Upaniṣad*-s.

While the Heart plays an important, even crucial, role in these passages, nevertheless, it serves as a container, as a space to be traversed on the path towards liberation, without being the ultimate goal itself.

Depending upon the context, views about the contents of the Heart vary. In the Vedic contexts, the *soma* is found in the Heart, along with visions, sounds, light, and liquids, which all either are contained in or flow from the Heart. In the Upaniṣadic texts, the Heart becomes the abode of the *ātman*, the Self. Because of the powerful equation between the *ātman* and the *brahman*, the Heart becomes a kind of interior universe, a repository of wholeness and completeness. This interior universe is referred to in the texts as the City of *brahman*. In the *Yoga-sūtra*, the

Heart is in a sense demoted. Because of the total transcendence of the *puruṣa* demanded by the Sāṃkhya-Yoga scheme, the Heart becomes the abode of the *buddhi*, the closest prakṛtic counterpart to the *ātman*. The curious fact about this entire process of change is that while new inflections of meaning continue to occur around the symbol, the older meanings do not fade totally from the scene. Instead they remain present in a subtly reinflected form.

We shall see this process at work in great detail in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva texts. When we turn to these texts it will become apparent that all of the earlier meanings continue to operate, even as a new dimension of ultimacy is added to the symbol.

In the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva texts at least three possible levels of meaning for the Heart can be identified: the physical organ, the *cakra*, and the Ultimate. On the simplest level, there are occasions when what is referred to is the simple physical organ that pumps the blood. But this is a rare meaning. As Potter indicates:

> Indian philosophers use this term (the heart) to mean the place within the body where feeling, willing, thinking, and so forth take place. It does not necessarily denote the physical organ which goes by that name in Indian anatomy.[55]

Many times, the term *hṛdaya* refers most directly to the concept of the Heart *cakra* that emerged from the Upaniṣadic and Yogic formulations. As a *cakra* the Heart functions as a precise locale within the subtle physiology of Yoga. This important nexus of the vital breaths, sensory perceptions, and underlying consciousness is located in the general area of the physical heart. The *cakra* forms part of the subtle physiology perceived by the yogins and has no exact analogue to the anatomical structures identified by modern medicine. Eliade summarizes the usual conception of this *cakra* (which forms only one of six such centers).

> The *anāhata* (*anāhata śabda* is the sound produced without contact between two objects; i.e., a mystical sound); region of the heart, seat of the *prāṇa* and of the *jīvātman*. Color, red. Lotus with twelve golden petals (letter *k, kh, g, gh*, etc.). In the middle, two interlaced triangles forming a Solomon's seal, in the center of which is another triangle enclosing a shining *liṅga*. Above the two triangles is *Īśvara* with the *Kākinī Śakti* (red in color). The *anāhata cakra* is related to the element air, the sense of touch, the phallus, the motor force, the blood system, etc.[56]

We must bear in mind that this description of the Heart *cakra* is taken from a sixteenth-century work, the *Ṣaṭcakra-nirūpaṇa*, and by that time a

considerable amount of systematization of these concepts had occurred. To complicate the matter even further there develops a tendency to distinguish between the *anāhata cakra* with twelve petals and the *hṛt cakra* with eight petals.[57] This distinction seems to arise quite early and is found in a text known as the *Dhyānabindu Upaniṣad.* In the text, in addition to a heart *cakra* with eight petals and one with twelve petals, a *cakra* with one hundred petals is also mentioned.[58]

A much later text of the *Haṭha Yoga*, the *Gheraṇḍa Saṃhitā*, describes a powerful meditation to be performed in the Heart:

> (Having closed the eyes), let him contemplate that there is a sea of nectar in his heart: that in the midst of that sea there is an island of precious stones, the very sand of which is pulverized diamonds and rubies. That on all sides of it, there are *kadamba* trees, laden with sweet flowers; that, next to these trees, like a rampart, there is a row of flowering trees, such as *mālati, mallikā, jātī, kesara, champaka, pārijāta*, and *padmas*, and that the fragrance of these flowers is spread all around, in every quarter. In the middle of this garden, let the *yogin* imagine that there stands a beautiful *kalpa* tree, having four branches, representing the four *Veda*-s, and that it is full of flowers and fruits. Insects are humming there and cuckoos singing. Beneath that tree, let him imagine a rich platform of precious gems, and on that a costly throne inlaid with jewels, and that on that throne sits his particular deity, as taught to him by his *guru.* Let him contemplate on the appropriate form, ornaments and vehicle of that Deity.[59]

Another text of the *Haṭha Yoga* tradition, the *Śiva Saṃhitā*, also describes the *anāhata cakra:*

> In the heart, is the fourth *cakra*, the *anāhata.* It has twelve petals designated by the letters, *k, kh, g, gh, ṅ, c, ch, j, jh, ñ, ṭ, ṭh.* Its color is deep blood-red; it has the seed of *vāyu, yaṃ*, and is a very pleasant spot. In this lotus is a flame called *bāṇliṅga;* by contemplating on this, one gets objects of the seen and the unseen universe. Its presiding deity is Pinākī, and the Kākini is its goddess. He who always contemplates on this lotus of the heart is eagerly desired by celestial maidens. He gets immeasurable knowledge, knows the past, present and future time; has clairaudience, clairvoyance and can walk in the air whenever he likes. He sees the adepts, and the goddesses known as the *yoginī*-s; obtains the power known as *khecarī*, and conquers all who move in the air. He who contemplates daily the hidden *bānaliṅga* undoubtedly obtains the psychic powers called *khecarī* (moving in the air) and *bhūcarī* (going at will all over the world). I cannot fully describe the importance of the meditation of this lotus; even the gods, Brahmā etc., keep the method of its contemplation secret.[60]

Gonda points out:

> It should however be emphasized that all the theories and speculations of the *brahman* which in its *ātman* aspect is held to reside in the heart have in view, not the physiological heart or the heart in the ordinary sense of the term, but the centre of the integral individual or personality of which the corporeal modality does not constitute more than a very limited part. The heart is the center of life, not only in the physiological, but also in a higher sense with regard to the Universal spirit in its relations with the individual. It is the seat of consciousness, of *manaḥ*, and *buddhiḥ*, the latter being the highest psychical organ and the basis of intelligence, which is illumined by the light of consciousness. That is to say, the heart centre is not, as such, and by nature, the abode of intuition, the source of intuitive thought, the place of contact between man and the divine power. It assumes this character only in those who are conscious of its higher function, according to the yogins through the conscious transformation of its functions.[61]

In outlining these references to the Heart, we have in a sense got ahead of ourselves. There is reason to suspect that many of the later yogic conceptions about the Heart that we have been examining were in fact related to, and perhaps even influenced by (whether directly or indirectly is difficult to determine), Shaiva formulations about the symbol. In laying out some of these ideas, non-dual Kashmir Shaiva concepts are put in their proper context. As we begin our examination of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition, we will see that upon occasion Abhinavagupta's usage of the term Heart seems to be directed toward the *cakra.* The elevation of the symbol to its final height, however, occurs only when the Heart is no longer used to refer to the *cakra*, but rather, by synecdoche, comes to be a term applied to the Ultimate itself.

It would be counterproductive to attempt to impose too sharp a distinction here. The term *hṛdaya* in the Shaiva texts often seems subtly to include all three levels of meaning. A rich interplay and transposition of meanings occurs from one of these levels to another. As is the case throughout the tradition, one must be wary of wishing to clarify the precise denotation of the term at the cost of stripping it of its multiple referents and, consequently, of much of its richness.

The Heart in Early Non-Dual Kashmir Shaiva Texts

The first explicit reference to the Heart in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva texts occurs in the foundational text of the tradition, the *Śiva-sūtra*-s (1.15):

> Due to the union of the mind with the Heart, objects, and also the void, appear (as . . . a form of consciousness).

Without analyzing this verse in the context of the larger text, it is nonetheless clear that from the first reference to it, the Heart is connected with various types of religious experience. In the present verse, it is the locus of a particular type of enlightenment experience which may be termed the *unitive vision.* In his commentary on this verse the great disciple of Abhinavagupta, Kṣemarāja, explains the following:

> *Hṛdaya* (in this context) means the light of consciousness inasmuch as it is the foundation of the entire universe. *Cittasaṃghaṭṭāt* means the concentration of the fickle mind on that (foundational consciousness), *dṛśyasya* means 'of all objective phenomena like blue, body, *prāṇa* and mind.' *Svāpasya* means of the void, i.e. of the absence of every objective phenomenon. *Darśanam* means the appearance of everything as it is in its essential reality devoid of the distinction between subject and object like a component of oneself. (The sum and substance of the whole *sūtra* is):—The individual mind intently entering into the universal light of foundational consciousness sees the entire universe as saturated with that consciousness.
>
> The same thing has been said in the *Vijñānabhairava:*
>
> "He whose mind together with the other senses is merged in the ether of the heart, who has entered mentally into the centre of the two bowls of the heart-lotus, who has excluded everything else from consciousness acquires the highest fortune, O Beautiful one." (Verse 49)
>
> Here the highest fortune refers to the acquisition of the Lordship of the universe. The *Svacchanda Tantra* referring to the great *Yogī* who has attained the state of highest Reality says:
>
> "He who has realized his identity with the Highest Reality pervading the two aspects (*adhvā*) (of *varṇa, pada,* and *mantra,* and *kalā, tattva* and *bhuvana*) manifest in the unconscious entities like the unmoving ones and conscious beings like the moving ones abides as identical with *Bhairava* in all beings, objects, *tattvas* like earth etc. and the senses." (IV, verse 310).
>
> The same idea has been expressed in the following verse in *Spandakārikā:*
>
> "As when the *Spanda* principle pervades the body then all knowledge and action appropriate to that condition are possible, even so if he abides in his Real Self, his omniscience and omnipotence can function everywhere."[62]

It is clear from Kṣemarāja's comment that the Heart is connected to the realization of the highest spiritual goals defined by the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. Once the individual mind penetrates the depths of the Heart, it can re-emerge to perceive the supposedly objective external reality that it had left behind. At this point the realization occurs that the external world is simply a form of consciousness, that it is nothing but

the consciousness which is both perceiver and perceived. The Heart, then, represents a concentrated node of existential density which is transformative of the functioning of the dispersed and disenfranchised individual mind. The *Śiva-sūtra*-s, true to the usual terse and slightly opaque style common to *Sūtra* texts, do not spell out these conceptions in any detail. Important religious concepts are simply presented; it was left to the preceptor or commentator to make explicit the concepts' true import.

In the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-kārikā*-s, the next important text in which the Heart appears, the Heart has migrated into a densely philosophical environment which developed explicitly to clarify these early formulations. Here is how Utpaladeva, the author of the *ĪPK*, introduces the notion of the Heart:

> Free and spontaneous self-apprehension (*vimarśa*) is the very nature of the light of consciousness. For otherwise, although reflections of external objects might fall upon it, it would be no better than an insentient crystal.
> Because the Self is different from the insentient: therefore it is spoken of as pure consciousness (*caitanya*), the implied sense of which is conscious activity or freedom with respect to conscious activities.
> Self-apprehending consciousness is the very self of consciousness. It is the supreme word (*parā vāk*) which always manifests itself by itself. It is freedom (*svātantrya*). It is the supreme power of the highest self.
> This consciousness is vibratory light (*sphurattā*). It is absolute reality (*mahā-sattā*) which is beyond spatial and temporal distinctions. This consciousness being the universal essence is called the Heart of the Lord.

In his commentary, called the *Vimarśinī*, Abhinavagupta explains that in this last verse

> *Hṛdaya* means mainstay or resting place. According to formerly established theory, the insentients rest in the sentient and the latter rests in the light of consciousness, with which it is one. The place of rest of this also is the power, the free-consciousness. Therefore, in different authoritative texts, the same is spoken of as the resting place of the universe, which ultimately rests in Parama Śiva, the highest abode of all. The Heart (*hṛdaya*), the resting place of all, is *mantra*, which, in its essence, is nothing but free-consciousness, which also is simply the power of the transcendental speech (*parā vāk*).[63]

In Abhinavagupta's comment we begin to see the expansion of the meaning of the Heart. A kind of nesting occurs: the insentient rests in the sentient and that, in turn, rests on the light of consciousness, which is identified as the Heart. In this passage we also see the curious tendency continuously to connect the Heart to what we have called its web of meaning: the *mantra*, the *parā vāk*, the *vimarśa śakti*.

Another early appearance of the notion of the Heart occurs in the *Śiva-dṛṣṭi*, a complex text by Utpaladeva's preceptor, Somānanda. He begins in the following way:

> 1. Let Śiva, who is co-penetrated with my own being (identified with me), praise Śiva in his extended form through his own power, Śiva who obscures Himself by Himself!
> 2. In Śiva, sight (*dṛk*) and action (*kriyā*) never cease to progress; nothing hinders the progression of his will (*icchā*). He is consciousness resting in itself (*nirvṛta*), that which pervades all things. He is none other than the Self which shines forth in every form of existence.
> 3-4. When He is in the form of an absorption in the experience of his conscious beatitude to the exclusion of all else—in this state, indeed, He is at once will, knowledge, and action—then these three powers, which are in their most subtle form, are in a state of perfect union within Him. In this state, Śiva is freed of distinctions, resolved in His conscious beatitude, in His supreme form.
> 5-6a. Śiva appears in this state not only in the supreme stage but also when, at the outset of any act of knowing, one is in contact with the knowing-subject (as yet unclouded by the knowable and by the means of knowledge). This state of union of all powers can be, therefore, experienced by virtue of an absorption in the initial part of any form of knowledge. The same thing may be said of the final part (literally, the fruit, the result) of any act of knowledge whatsoever.
> 6b-7a. In this way, Śiva—who is consciousness resting in itself (*nirvṛta*)—is never separate from this triple power, neither in the state of differentiation nor (all the more) in the state of non-differentiation.
> 7b-8. At the moment in which the consciousness begins to tend towards the creation of the different products which make up multiplicity, one has then the initial moment (*tuṭi*) of the will. The cause of this tension is a vibrating (*jṛmbhā* = *ghūrṇana*, UD, p. 10) of amazement in the intellect (*āmoda* = *camatkāra*, UD, p. 10), the object of which is the expanding of the whole. The whole is none other than Śiva.
> 9-11a. This tension is perceptible in the locus of the Heart when one remembers suddenly a thing that must be done, at the moment in which one receives good news, when one experiences fear unexpectedly, when one sees again unexpectedly a thing which one has not seen for a long time, when one feels (in one's loins) the flow of the emission, at the moment in which one pronounces the emission, when one reads quickly, when one runs. On each of these occasions there is a mingling of all the powers (*vilolatā* = *lobībhāva* = *miśrībhāva*).[64]

This remarkable statement attempts to bring the moments of total absorption of Śiva and of his creative emergence from this absorption within the scope of ordinary experience. The moment of vital shock, of tension, when one

suddenly remembers something, is a common experience in which there is a kind of elevation and expansion of the mind. Similarly, when one experiences an unexpected fear there is at once a sudden awakening and sharpening of the senses and a process of retrenchment in which one abandons all unnecessary and trivial concerns and concentrates on that is causing the fear. These and the other moments described by Somānanda are said to bring one to a momentary experience of the creative tension that resides and emerges from the Heart. At this point, the three powers of volition, cognition, and action mingle together and merge in much the same way that they do when one is absorbed in Śiva prior to the manifestation of all differentiated objects.

Somānanda emphasizes a certain kind of psychological experience available to the ordinary individual. He does not do this to denigrate the attainment of the *yogin*, who attains the *citta-saṃghaṭṭa* described in the *Śiva-sūtra* passage just quoted. Undoubtedly the attainments of the *yogin* are sources of indescribable astonishment (as is stated in *ŚSV* 1.12)[65] and are far loftier than the ordinary experiences mentioned. However, by referring to these moments of ordinary life, Somānanda illustrates the teaching that the Heart, as the locus of creative tension, does not cease functioning during ordinary life. Nor is the experience of this creative tension solely the domain of the exalted practitioner. Somānanda maintains that a continuity exists between ordinary experience and the experience of the *yogin* precisely because *all* experience is a function of the underlying awareness situated in the Heart. We now turn to consider the Heart as Abhinavagupta presents it in his texts.

CHAPTER 4

The Heart as Ultimate Reality

The Heart of Śiva

The Heart, says Abhinavagupta, is the very Self of Śiva, of Bhairava, and of the Devī, the Goddess who is inseparable from Śiva. Indeed, the Heart is the site of their union (*yāmala*), of their embrace (*saṃghaṭṭa*). This abode is pure consciousness (*caitanya*) as well as unlimited bliss (*ānanda*). As consciousness the Heart is the unbounded, infinite light (*prakāśa*) as well as the freedom (*svātantrya*) and spontaneity (*vimarśa*) of that light to appear in a multitude and variety of forms. The Heart, says Abhinavagupta, is the sacred fire-pit of Bhairava.[1]

The Heart is the Ultimate (*anuttara*) which is both utterly transcendent to (*viśvottīrṇa*) and yet totally immanent in (*viśvamaya*) all created things. It is the ultimate essence (*sāra*). Thus, the Heart embodies the paradoxical nature of Śiva and is therefore a place of astonishment (*camatkāra*), sheer wonder (*vismaya*), and ineffable mystery. The Heart is the fullness and unboundedness of Śiva (*pūrṇatva*), the plenum of being that overflows continuously into manifestation. At the same time, it is also an inconceivable emptiness (*śūnyātiśūnya*).[2] The Heart is the unbounded and universal Self (*pūrṇāhantā*).

The Heart of Śiva is not a static or inert absolute, however. In fact, the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition considers it to be in a state of perpetual movement, a state of vibration (*spanda*)[3] in which it is continuously contracting and expanding (*saṃkoca-vikāsa*), opening and closing (*unmeṣa-nimeṣa*), trembling (*ullasitā*), quivering (*sphuritā*), throbbing, waving, and sparkling (*ucchalatā*). The intensity and speed of this move-

ment is such that paradoxically it is simultaneously a perfect dynamic stillness.[4]

The tradition states that the Heart is the enormous ocean (*ambunidhi*), the ocean of light, the ocean of consciousness. The waters of consciousness that in man are broken by countless polarizing and divisive waves (*ūrmi*) may be easily brought to a state of dynamic stillness by the process of immersion or absorption (*samāveśa*) in the Heart.[5]

The perpetual effervescence, ebullition, and incandescence at the center of Śiva's being provides the motor, as it were, that drives the entire process of manifestation;[6] or, as Abhinavagupta terms it, of emission of the entire universe. Equally important, through the medium of the empowered *mantra*, the power that resides in the Heart provides the possibility of a return to Śiva, which is to say, the possibility of enlightenment. Thus, this power in the Heart, which is the Goddess, is at once centrifugal (*pravṛtti*), that is, emissional and expansive, as well as centripetal (*nivṛtti*), that is, absorptive and unitive.[7] This centripetal motion of the Goddess resides in man as the *kuṇḍalinī* energy that impels one back to the source and center of one's being in a completely natural and spontaneous (*sahaja*) way.

Abhinavagupta identifies the Goddess in the Heart with the Supreme Word (*parā-vāk*), the transcendent sounding of the motor of being, the primordial sound (*nāda*) of the fiery waters.[8] This Supreme Word, while ultimately beyond any of the combinations of human speech, may be transcribed on the gross level by one of several *mantra*-s: *OṂ*, *AHAM*, *SAUḤ*. These and other *mantra*-s, when properly empowered (*mantra-vīrya*) by the awakened life-force (*prāṇa*)[9] and the consciousness of the *guru*, and properly employed by the receptive disciple, engage the centripetal motion of the Heart. The fragmented and restless mind is thus calmed, awakened, and intensified by the *mantra*, which, tending automatically to move to its own source, discovers the fullness and unboundedness of the Heart.[10] There the disciple will hear the Supreme Word as the unstruck (*anāhata*) sound of the Heart which is the universal life force or cosmic breath.[11]

Clearly, there is a richness and density of meanings interwoven in the symbolism of the Heart. By examining several representative passages from the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva texts, we can begin our attempt to analyze the web of meaning that is contained in these and similar passages.

The Heart: Śiva and His Disguises

Silburn concisely sums up the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva attitude about the Ultimate when she comments:

> Cette réalité qui échappe à la dètermination et ne renferme aucune des modalités habituelles de la conscience est ici nommé Bhairava, existence brahmique, coeur (*hṛdaya*), ambroisie (*amṛta*), réalité ultime (*tattva* ou *mahāsattā*), essence (*svarūpa*), Soi (*ātman*), vacuité (*śūnyatā*). Elle demeure essentiellement ineffable et peu import qu'on la qualifie de plénitude, ou de vacuité, tout vocable perdant nécessairement son sens normal lorsqu'il s'applique au contenu de l'experience mystique en raison de son infinie simplicité, on ne peut l'imaginer, ni la penser, ni la suggérer; il est donc nécessaire de l'éprouver par soi-même.[12]

Silburn points to a central theme: the primary importance of the direct experience of the Ultimate. As she says, the Ultimate is not something that can be imagined, thought about, or suggested. One must experience it for oneself. Given the idiosyncratic nature of personal experience, especially of experience that attempts to grasp the ineffable, it is not surprising that a great variety of terms are applied to the Ultimate. These terms form a kind of network of meaning by which the tradition approximates the Ultimate reality, which is the Heart.

In order to grasp this network better, we can begin by turning to three revealing passages, one by Abhinavagupta and two by his disciple, Kṣemarāja. The first passage occurs in the *Tantrasāra*, a text by Abhinavagupta that summarizes many of the topics presented in much greater detail in the *Tantrāloka*.

> In this respect the intrinsic nature of the Lord is consciousness in all of its fullness and the power of the Lord is nothing more than this state of fullness. This power is called by the sacred texts by different names in the order of the meaning of its effects. These are group (*kula*), efficacy (*sāmarthya*), wave (*ūrmi*), heart (*hṛdaya*), essence (*sāra*), vibration (*spanda*), magical power (*vibhūti*), Queen of the three (*trīśikā*), *Kālī*, enchantress (*Karṣaṇī*), passionate one (*Caṇḍī*), voice (*vāṇī*), enjoyment (*bhoga*), sight (*dṛk*), eternal (*nityā*).[13]

In his commentary on the thirteenth *śloka* of the *Vibhūti Spanda* section of the *Spanda-kārikā* Kṣemarāja comments:

> The power of absolute freedom of the Lord which is eternal and of the form of perfect I-consciousness is, in different scriptures, called in various, innumerable ways, such as, *parā* (the Highest), *matsyodarī* (fish-bellied i.e. full of creative throb), *Mahāsattā* (the Highest Being), *sphurattā* (the glimmer of light), *ūrmi* (wave, the great manifestation), *sāra* (the quintessence of existence), *hṛdaya* (the Heart, the creative centre), Bhairavī (the *śakti* of Bhairava), Devī (Goddess), *śikhā* (the flame).[14]

A similar statement occurs in the opening pages of a text by Kṣemarāja known as the *Parā-prāveśikā:*

(Introductory verses:)
Adoration to that brilliantly throbbing consciousness, the Heart of the Lord, which takes the form of the highest *śakti* and all other *śakti*-s, the essence of the Universe and yet transcending it.
(Commentary on this verse:)
Here indeed the Supreme Lord has as his nature the supreme light, and the intrinsic nature of that light is a free and spontaneous self-apprehension. This self-apprehension is the original and natural Egoity which manifests, illuminates, and destroys the Universe and it, in this way, shines forth.
If the supreme light were devoid of this free and spontaneous self-referential capacity, it would be powerless and inert. That self-referential capacity is given many names in the *āgama*-s: spirit (*cit*), consciousness (*caitanya*), the ever-arising supreme word (*svarasoditā parā vāk*), freedom (*svātantrya*), the Supreme Self (*paramātman*), the preeminent (*mukhya*), sovereignty (*aiśvarya*), agency (*kartṛtva*), flashing vibratory throb (*sphurattā*), essence (*sāra*), Heart (*hṛdaya*), subtle vibration (*spanda*)—and because of this, its real nature is that of the original natural egoity.
The Supreme Lord who is self-illuminating appears, shines along with his Supreme *śakti* as the nature of the world beginning with the principle of Śiva and ending with the principle of the earth.[15]

In these passages a series of interrelated terms, among them the Heart, purport to detail the nature of the power of the Lord. Abhinavagupta observes that this power is called by different names in different texts, and that these names correspond to its different effects. The sheer diversity and variety of these terms, however, present puzzling discrepancies. It is unclear how these lists are to be interpreted. To begin with, the individual terms cannot be equated with each other. The Supreme Reality is held to be a unity by the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. If each of these terms names an aspect of the power of the Ultimate and so brings out an important facet of the Supreme, then it is not necessary that these facets be directly equated among themselves. They can all be equated directly to the Supreme and that identity is enough to unify them. This play on differences and unity is important as it reflects the *bhedābheda*, the difference-nondifference interpretation of the Ultimate that seems to approximate most closely the brand of non-duality characteristic of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition.

One result of this particular philosophical interpretation is a certain kind of doctrinal flexibility. This flexibility is often encountered in Abhinavagupta's wrtings. It seems to be a result of an attitude which holds that while distinctions are real and true on their own level, they are also continuously being undercut by the absolute reality, which is at once the origin and negation of any possible distinction. Thus, while doctrinal

distinctions are promulgated, adherence to the master doctrine of non-duality causes a certain looseness in the tenacity with which these other, relative doctrinal distinctions are embraced. An excellent example of this flexibility is displayed in the above lists. There Abhinavagupta and Kṣemarāja are not taking pains to make clear any sharp doctrinal differentiations among the different facets they are naming. Rather, the lists convey a certain deliberate relaxation of doctrinal explicitness in favor of a larger truth, the multifarious nature of Śiva.

We have encountered Abhinavagupta's own comments as to the futility of any attempt at intellectually pinning down the nature of the Ultimate. Nevertheless, Abhinavagupta does emphasize certain ideas with respect to Śiva. Perhaps his primary view is that Śiva is the totality of consciousness that is the source of all manifest reality, at once totally transcendent and completely immanent.

> Śiva who is pervaded in this fashion by a subtle sounding (*nāda*) is composed of consciousness. He who manifests himself at one and the same time as the father and mother is the creator of the entire universe.[16]

Further, he states:

> Everything that exists resides within the blessed Lord Bhairava. Whatever appears within our Heart or leaves the point of our tongue resides, I say, in Parameśvara, who is not limited by time, is one with consciousness, and is perpetually united with all the powers. He constitutes a unity which coexists without contradiction with the hundreds of creations and dissolutions which are manifested by his contraction and expansion, and it is by means of these that he expresses his freedom. This reality of Śiva, therefore, has neither beginning nor end and it is luminous with its own light. Its essence is a complete freedom which consists in perfect independence determined by the fullness of all things. Within itself it embraces all principles, which are in effect identical with it.[17]

Not content to let the matter rest there, Abhinavagupta forcefully confutes those who would think of Śiva as completely inactive and only transcendent. In the following passage he seems to be directing an attack on those who would equate Śiva with the Sāṃkhya notion of the *puruṣa:*

> The Śiva which they imagine, completely pacified, differentiated from all other things, transcendent to all the other paths, similar therefore to something insentient or inert, like a glass, does not exist anywhere at all. Śiva in effect is nothing more than this consciousness, which unfolds itself everywhere in the form of a great light. Its very condition as Śiva indeed consists in the fact

> that all the varied forms of the universe appear. This process of manifestation into all the forms of the universe produces itself completely freely within him.[18]

Here we encounter Abhinavagupta's refusal to sunder Śiva and the manifest world of forms. It is this strict adherence to non-duality which brings him to admit the importance and intrinsic reality of the different aspects of Śiva.

The network of terms naming the power of the Lord may also be seen as naming the guises that Śiva wears as he performs one or another function. It is important to note that many of these terms refer to the Goddess in various ways. The power (*śakti*) of the Lord appears to take on a separate personality as the Goddess. The hypostatization of the Goddess might appear to indicate that a distinction is being postulated between the Goddess and Śiva. Abhinavagupta states in no uncertain terms, however, that it is a serious mistake to conceive of the Goddess as in any way different from Śiva:

> The Supreme Lord is composed of five sorts of action, and in reality he is always accompanied by the *śakti* who in her supreme form is composed of grace; indeed, the one self is grace; for *śakti* should not be conceived as different from Śiva.[19]

In the introductory verses to the *PTv*, Abhinavagupta compresses into four short stanzas his conception of the Heart:

> My Heart, which is composed of the emission of the quivering flashing condition of the union of the Mother and Father, whose body is full, which generates that concealed light which has five faces, producing the great and quite new manifestation, which is the abode of the stainless manifesting energies, because of its quivering and throbbing, is the supreme immortal group (*kula*).
> Within whom all this universe appears, appearing as the external luminous projection during the process of manifestation. Situated in the Supreme, which is trembling, which is immovable, to Her I bow down, the one Goddess who is the perception of one's own Self.
> She, who when placed in the Heart, causes to appear the triad which consists of the man, the power and Śiva. I make obeisance to Her, who is the Supreme, the unequalled light of the Self, who is splendorous illumination and astonishment.
> Glory to the One of priceless greatness, who rules the hosts of liberated beings, the blessed primordial teacher, Śambhu, the benevolent One, Śrī Kaṇṭha, the supreme Lord.[20]

These stanzas are a good example of the density and compression of meaning characteristic of all of Abhinavagupta's laudatory verses. In the first

verse alone, practically every major concept of the Kaula lineage is broached. In this verse reference is made to the Father and Mother in union, while the second and third verses seem directed towards the Goddess alone, and in the fourth the masculine Lord is selected for praise. Thus no exclusive favoritism is displayed at the outset.

One can note with interest that the union of the Father and Mother occurs in the Heart, portrayed here as a region of flashing, quivering, vibrating light. This light has five faces, which correspond to the traditional lists of the five faces of Śiva. Furthermore, it is the source of manifestation, the origin of that which appears, that is to say, the visible reality. In this creative role, the Heart is said to be composed of the Emissional Power and to structure the Supreme (*anuttara*), immortal group or Embodied Cosmos (*kula*).

Many of these same themes occur in the *PTlv:*

> O lady with beautiful hips! The Heart is the subtle vibration of the triangle which consists of the incessant expansion and contraction of the three powers, and it is the place of repose, the place of supreme bliss. This very Heart is the Self of Bhairava, of that which is the essence of Bhairava, and of the blessed supreme Goddess who is inseparable and nondifferent from him.[21]

This passage links the vibratory nature of the Heart to the triangle and to the three powers that compose it. In addition, the instrinsic inseparability of Bhairava and the Devī is reiterated. In both of these passages the term *anuttara*, the Ultimate, appears as an appropriate appellation for the Heart. It is to this term that we now specifically turn.

Anuttara

Anuttara literally means the None-Higher. Gnoli renders it consistently in this literal fashion by translating it as *Senza Superiore*. Padoux prefers the slightly less literal rendering *Sans-Egal*. While we might have expected a superlative adjective to be employed to express the notion of ultimacy, the insistent dynamism of the comparative, higher (*uttara*), preserves the supremacy of the *anuttara* over any possible challenges in a way that the superlative, highest (*uttama*), would not have done.

The centrality of the term is clearly demonstrated by the alternative title to the *PTlv* which is the *Anuttara-tattva-vimarśinī, The Examination of the Principle of the Ultimate*. *Anuttara*, the Ultimate, forms the reality that will be examined from many points of view in the text. In this study the term *anuttara* is rendered as the Ultimate or the Supreme, in preference to the more literal but also more awkward rendering of None-Higher.

As has already been mentioned, the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition holds that the *anuttara*, or Ultimate reality, cannot be accurately expressed by the finite concepts of thought and language. The term refers to that which is beyond the manifest structures of ordinary reality. Abhinavagupta likens the attempt to understand the *anuttara* to the difficulty one has in stepping on the shadow of one's own hat.[22]

Abhinavagupta weaves the concepts of the *anuttara*, the *kaulikī*, and the Heart together in an important passage in the *TĀ:*

> Thus the entire universe is a reflection in the pure sky of the consciousness of Bhairava, in the Lord, and it is not at all due to the favor of anyone else. The Lord's complete independence with regard to his being the Self of the Universe is acknowledged as the highest understanding (*pratibhā*), the Goddess, the Supreme (*A*).
> That Supreme power of the Lord who is beyond the group (*akula*), is called *kaulikī* because it causes the group to be manifested, and the Lord is inseparable from that Power.[23]

This passage clearly conveys the important idea that the *anuttara* is conceived primarily in terms of consciousness, the Bhairava, who is also the Goddess and the Supreme. In addition, it introduces the grammalogue, or code vowel, for *anuttara*, which is *A*. As the first phoneme, *A* conveys the primacy and supremacy of the Supreme. Yet *A* is not only the first vowel and phoneme; the tradition also teaches that it is present in all the other phonemes as well. Similarly, the Supreme, the origin of all manifest realities, remains present in everything that originates from It.

The entire thrust of the *PTlv* centers around the teaching of the attainment of the direct experience of this Ultimate reality in the Heart. The introductory verses immediately announce the focus on *anuttara* and the Heart:

Where all splendors are in the light

And all darknesses in the dark

Brilliant light and gloomy darkness!

I praise that transcendent supreme light.

Always new, hidden,

Yet old and apparent to all,

The Heart, the Ultimate

Shines alone with the brilliance of the Supreme.[24]

Here again we encounter densely packed verses replete with allusions to complex Kaula teachings. The first line of the second verse transcribes Abhinavagupta's name, *abhinava* (always new), *gupta* (hidden), and perpetuates a typical play on words by which the author at once conveys his name and perhaps also conveys to his audience his complete realization of the Ultimate reality.

The very first verse in the *PT* asks how it is possible for the *anuttara* to grant the *kaulika* perfection. Abhinavagupta's comment on the first *PT* verse in the *PTlv* begins with an examination of *anuttara:*

> O God, you are my own Self, always present from the beginning in knowledge and action, you alone are the Ultimate, the Superior, the Excellent, the Surpassing; and the Supreme is the conscious perceiver with respect to the insentient, the inert. However, that perceiver whose nature is consciousness and which is self-illuminating, is not in turn perceived by another subject; thus it is termed the Ultimate.
> For this reason, the Ultimate, formed of consciousness, is always present everywhere, and is devoid of spatial or temporal dimensions, of prior and subsequent; it is undeniable and unconcealed. What then can be said of it?[25]

By qualifying the Supreme as self-illuminating (*svaprakāśa*), Abhinavagupta avoids the fallacy of *regressus ad infinitum* which might accompany the qualification of the Supreme as a perceiver (*grāhakarūpa*). The Ultimate is Supreme precisely because there is no other perceiver which perceives it. The Supreme is formed of consciousness (*saṃvidrūpa*), its nature is consciousness (*cidātman*), and it is uniformly and only consciousness (*cidekarūpa*). This consciousness is always present everywhere (*sarvatābhāsita*). In it, the usual temporal and spatial distinctions do not hold, because it is beyond all such possible distinctions.

This condition of being beyond might have led us to choose the term *transcendent* as an appropriate translation for *anuttara.* However, the usual interpretation of transcendent includes an important denotation of separation. While the *anuttara* is an absolute reality, it is not correct to conceive of it as in any way separate from finite realities. The *anuttara* is lauded as that which is completely full (*paripūrṇānuttara*),[26] and as the abode (*dhāma*) in which everything occurs:

> This is the threefold manifestation, which has the phoneme *A* as its root, and ends in the phoneme *KṢA*. That manifestation is in the abode of the Ultimate *A*, has its beginning in the Ultimate *A*, and finally therein comes to repose in the very Śiva. Therefore, by that knowledge, the true nature of the Ultimate, of the vibration, comes to be well known. Which is to say, that the Ultimate is only that, i.e., the entire *sṛṣṭi* is really only the Ultimate *A*. Thus, the power

> which abides in the Heart is, above all, formed of an undivided self-referential consciousness. Then, that power, by its own innate freedom formed of the Ultimate *A*, turns itself into distinct cognitions whose form is the *kaulikasiddhi*. This has been decisively ascertained in all the *Tantra*-s such as the *Śiva, Rudra, Rahasya* etc.[27]

The Supreme reality is Śiva. Yet Śiva and his *śakti* are inseparable. In this passage we encounter the impersonal *śaktic* counterpart for the *anuttara*, the *spanda*. The *anuttara* is equated to the vibration, *spanda*. This vibration is the power found in the Heart, which consists essentially of an undivided self-referential consciousness (*avibhāga-parāmarśarūpa*), which is complete freedom (*svātantrya*).

The richness of the term *anuttara* is such that Abhinavagupta devotes six pages of the *PTv*[28] to an extended folk etymology of the term in which a free gloss yields a variety of different meanings. Some of these meanings are: the incomparable, the highest; where there can neither be a question by the disciple nor an answer (*uttara*) by the teacher; where there is no need for crossing (*ut-tṛ*) to the other shore in order to attain liberation. If *uttara* is taken to mean that from which one emerges, namely bondage, then *anuttara* is liberation. If *uttara* is taken to mean specific verbal expressions (*śabdana*), then *anuttara* is that with respect to which there can be no use of words. *Uttara* can be taken as a series of graded methods that lead upward, so that *anuttara* is a condition in which all of these methods have been surpassed.

By playing on the various meanings of the words and verbal roots involved, and, it must be admitted, by some rather far-fetched interpretations, Abhinavagupta demonstrates a traditional method of textual and terminological interpretation much favored by Indian exegetes. Rather than quibble with the accuracy of Abhinavagupta's grammatical derivations, we should perceive the enormous density of meaning which he compresses into and derives from a single term.

We turn now to another aspect of the Supreme, its condition of being a center, *madhya*.

Madhya: The Omnipresent Center

The Heart is *madhya*, which is to say that it stands in the middle, in the midst. It is intermediate; it stands between any two extremes. It is central; it is the interior, which is the space or vacuum at the center of all things. We encounter a developed teaching about *madhya* in the *Vijñāna-bhairava-tantra*, an important text that was well known to Abhinavagupta.

This text consists of 112 meditative techniques for the attainment of the Ultimate reality. One of these many meditations reads as follows:

> When the energy in the form of breath neither goes out nor comes back in, then it simply expands in the center into a non-dual non-discursive awareness. This is the attainment of the condition of Bhairava.[29]

We see that the "middle state" is instrumental in the attainment of the state of *nirvikalpa*, the condition of Bhairava. This attainment is contingent upon a balancing, produced by the meditative process, of the two flows of the vital breath, which is directly linked to the power.

Another meditation technique makes reference to the central vein (*madhyanāḍī*) and likens this vein to a filament of the stem of a lotus. Within this central vein or channel resides the goddess in the form of the inner firmament (*antarvyoman*).

> The medial "vein" (*nāḍī*) is situated in the middle. It is as slender as the stem of a lotus. If one meditates on the inner vacuity of this *nāḍī*, in the form of the Goddess, then the Divine is revealed.[30]

The meanings of central, middle, and interior are skillfully intertwined in this verse. Meditation on this central reality unfolds, and illuminates (*prakāśate*) that which is divine.

The notion of the *madhyanāḍī* is pursued by Abhinavagupta in contexts that allow us to see it as an important technical concept belonging to the yogic processes taught by the tradition. In the *TĀ*[31] Abhinavagupta quotes a long passage from the *Triśiro-bhairava-tantra* which discusses the ascent through the "channel" of the "center" in order to achieve the plane of the *mantra*. The yogin must first balance the ascending and descending energies of breath. This is referred to as the method of the "stick" (*daṇḍaprayoga*).[32] He will then experience a great light which bestows eternal knowledge. As a result of this practice he then attains the highest abode and comes to dwell in the "city" of pure consciousness, which is free from waves and whose nature is Śiva.

In the *PTv* Abhinavagupta goes into more detail on the entrance into the channel of the center:

> The manifestation of Bhairava, the immovable abode, of Śiva who transcends the Embodied Cosmos, without waves, requires that the breaths and vital energies and so on that are in the channels of the senses should be steeped and concentrated in a single place. Only under these circumstances will one be able to penetrate into the great central abode of the *suṣumna* and attain in this way

> a state of identity with this trembling agitation (*kṣobha*) of one's own power. Once this identity is achieved and the multiplicity has been dissolved, one enters into an amazement of the 'I' itself, of self-referential consciousness itself, abounding with all its powers. The manifestation of Bhairava occurs precisely as a result of this penetration which consists in a separation of the Emissional Power from the force of the great *mantra* and involves a union with the *Rudra*-Dyad which is bliss and a completely full emission.[33]

In this passage we see that the central channel is explicitly identified with the *suṣumna*. This coincides with the reference to the "stick," a reference to the inner spinal passageway for the subtlest of vital energies. The various forms of vital energy which are dispersed throughout the sensory apparatus must be drawn inwards and amassed in one place. This concentration of energy will permit the practitioner to effect an entrance into the *suṣumna*. He then attains the agitation (*kṣobha*) characteristic of the power. This agitation allows him to dissolve the multiplicity of finite objects and experiences and enter into the amazement (*camatkāra*) of the infinite Self, the 'I'.

The specificities of the yogic techniques for entrance into the central vein are generalized in other meditations of the *V. BH.* into a process of allowing awareness to rest in the interval between any two thoughts or perceptions. In the following two meditations these more general instructions are recommended:

> At the moment when one has perception or knowledge of two objects or ideas, one should simultaneously banish both perceptions or ideas and, apprehending the gap or interval between the two, should mentally rest there. In that gap reality will flash forth suddenly.[34]
>
> When the mind, which has just left one object, is not allowed to go toward another object, then, because of that which is between the two objects, an intense meditative realization unfolds.[35]

The Ultimate reality is omnipresent. However, the experience of the omnipresence of the Ultimate is hindered by one's awareness of the entire range of manifest, finite objects that are constantly there to be experienced. These two meditations suggest that because of the omnipresence of the Ultimate, it may be located between the experience of any two thoughts, objects, or emotions. It is always to be found subjacent to the world of finite contents and dichotomizing thoughts. Thus, when one penetrates into the interval between any two things or ideas, one will not encounter a nothingness, but rather the fullness of the totality. This is the *nirvikalpa* condition, which simply shines forth when awareness penetrates into the interstices of its own contents.

Thus, the Heart as *madhya* underlies and mediates between any two distinctions. It can be discovered anywhere, not as an additional content of awareness, but as the uncovering of the very nature of pure consciousness itself. Thus Śiva, the infinite consciousness, is spoken of as being beyond any distinctions. He is always the 'third' element that transcends, undercuts, and in the end, unifies all possible oppositions.

Kṣemarāja had all of these processes in mind when he condensed into one technique the notion of the expansion of the center, *madhyavikāsa*. He describes the technique in his *Pratyabhijñā-hṛdayam:*

> By the expansion of the center, one attains the bliss of consciousness.[36]

In his commentary, Kṣemarāja defines *madhya* as the blessed consciousness, itself present as the innermost reality of everything, without which nothing is possible, unless it be attached to that consciousness for support.[37]

It is in the center of the center that the Śakti dwells as the power that enlivens and controls the entire wheel of sense capacities and subtle conduits. This power is conceived as the place of birth of all beings. Its nature is of the *liṅga* and *karṇikā*.[38] In the *PTlv*, this powerful dimensionless 'point' of the center is the place of union of the Divine Pair, Śiva and *śakti*. It is from this place of union that the power which manifests all of reality radiates outward.

> Consciousness, which is formed of the Ultimate (*A*), vibrates with a seed vibration in the two extreme points of the first vowel (*A*), two points whose nature is that of reposing in their own-nature. And because of the power of that vibration, consciousness, which is composed of the essence of all, becomes in the central point the impulse towards the manifestation of the distinct and different cognitions.[39]

There are other meditations prescribed in the *V. Bh.* that counsel an attitude of attaining the center. A particularly obscure one prescribes resting the consciousness in the interval between the fire and the poison.[40] This obscure verse is elucidated by Abhinavagupta in the *TĀ* with reference to the *mantra SAUḤ*.[41] This verse provides an excellent example of tantric symbolic language. The "fire" and "poison" refer at one and the same time to the moments of the beginning and end of the sexual act, and to the moments of expansion and contraction of the vital energy as it prepares to rise upward through the *suṣumna*.[42] Another meditation consists in fixing the mind in the interval between pleasure and pain.[43] It asserts that it is there that reality abides. Yet another meditation counsels an avoidance of both hatred and attachment and avers that it is in the freedom from these extremes that the *brahman* glides.[44]

Silburn summarizes these ideas as follows:

> On ne peut examiner les procédés qui servent à ouvrir le Centre sans avoir au préalable défini le Centre lui-même. Strictement traduit, *madhya* est le milieu ou l'intervalle, mais dans le *Vijñānabhairava* dont il forme la charnière maîtresse ce terme est prégnant de sens; ne pas le comprendre serait renoncer à comprendre ce Tantra. Pourtant comment déterminer l'attitude si simple et si profonde qu'il implique? Envisagé du point de vue du yoga, *madhya* est conçu comme le point d'intersection entre deux rythmes, deux états ou deux choses; plénitude en tant que jonction, il devient fissure ou vide interstitiel si on le considère comme l'intervalle qui les sépare. Le yogin s'efforce de centrer à tout moment son attention sur la jonction de son choix: jonction qui peut porter sur deux souffles, deux sons, deux mouvements en vue de découvrir le juste point d'équilibre, seul et véritable lieu de repos. Dès lors, il commence à vivre à partir du point central (le Coeur), se tenant toujours imperturbable à la jonction, ses moindres actes et pensées imprégnés du sens profond qu'il y découvre.[45]

We shall now turn to another aspect of the Supreme, the categories of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa.*

The Self-Reflecting Illumination: Prakāśa-Vimarśa

An important passage from Kṣemarāja's text entitled *Parā-prāveśikā, The Entrance into the Supreme*, begins with a summary statement on the nature of *prakāśa-vimarśa:*

> Here indeed the Supreme Lord has as his nature the supreme light, and the intrinsic nature of that light is a free and spontaneous self-apprehension. This self-apprehension is the original and natural egoity which manifests, illuminates and destroys the Universe, and it in this way shines forth.
> If the supreme light were devoid of this free and spontaneous self-referential capacity, it would be powerless and inert. That self-referential capacity is given many names in the *āgama*-s: spirit (*cit*), etc.[46]

In essence, the *prakāśa* is the primordial light beyond and behind all manifestations. The tradition emphasizes repeatedly that this light is both transcendent, (*taduttīrṇa*), as well as immanent (*viśvātmaka*) in its manifestation.[47] We must not let the use of the term *transcendent* lead us astray. The term *viśvottīrṇa*, being beyond all, places emphasis on the infinity of Śiva as opposed to the finitude of all that manifests from Him. We cannot simply consider Śiva to be the sum total of the entire manifest

reality. He is more than that, infinitely more. However, his condition of surpassing his own manifestation does not in any way cause him to be separate from that manifestation. He is within it, or, more precisely, it is within him. Abhinavagupta makes much the same point in a discussion of the nature of the Heart-*mantra* when he comments:

> Because of this, the emission, which is situated in the center, is in immediate contact with the states of the vowel (*A U*) and the Being (*S*), which are placed at both of its extremes, and it comes to appropriate the blessed Supreme Goddess, whose nature is the Ultimate, and which abides in nondifferentiation with the Supreme Bhairava, the Great Lord, which power transcends all and at the same time is composed of all principles, and is joined with all the masses of existing things which thus form its limbs.[48]

The primordial light is known by a great variety of terms in the nondual Kashmir Shaiva tradition: *sphurattā, sphuraṇa, ābhāsa, pratibhā, ullāsa.* The variety of words for *light* employed by the Shaiva tradition may be thought to derive from the continuous attempt to describe the essentially indescribable contents of yogic experience which include great varieties of powerful and subtle phenomena of light.

In an essential sense, Śiva as the Ultimate is pure unmanifested light. He is more than that, however. His light is the light of consciousness. Consequently, the tradition emphasizes the equal importance of the *vimarśa* aspect. This concept teaches the freedom and spontaneity of the light of consciousness. Even more importantly, the notion of *vimarśa* indicates the essential capacity of consciousness for self-referral. Consciousness is not just a clear crystal which, mirrorlike, reflects all things that fall upon it. It has an intrinsic capacity of self-referral which makes it alive and powerful rather than inert and powerless. This self-referential capacity is the *śakti*, the power of consciousness. The *śakti* is responsible for the process of manifestation of all finite appearances within the infinite light. This capacity to manifest has at its basis the notion of *vimarśa*, the capacity for consciousness to be conscious of itself. In addition, the self-referential capacity of consciousness lies at the basis of the yogic *sādhanā.* The techniques of tantric meditation employed by the tradition engage this essential characteristic of the very nature of consciousness.

Abhinavagupta expands upon the nature of the *vimarśa* aspect of consciousness.

> The self-referential capacity of consciousness is united with all things. From within its very self, this capacity of consciousness differentiates the other, and from the other it actualizes itself again, It then unifies both of them, the self and the other, and having unified them, it submerges them both back into itself.[49]

It is the play between the light and the self-referential aspects of consciousness that structures the particular inflection of *bhedābheda*, dual-non-dual, characteristic of the tradition. The light is supremely stable in its non-dual, transcendent state and yet manifestation and differentiation occur. The manifestation does not represent a radical break, nor is it the emergence of a new and ontologically separate reality. It is simply an expression of the potentiality harbored within the Ultimate reality of Śiva. These appearances as separate phenomena are not, in a final and absolute sense, real. The tradition never denies, however, the reality of the manifestation of appearances as a phenomenon that occurs *within* the Ultimate reality of Śiva. The light is real and the phenomena that it displays are real. These manifested phenomena enjoy a reflected status of reality. At the same time, there is a final sense in which they are not ultimately real because they do not enjoy, as separate phenomena, the eternal existence and freedom of Śiva. Abhinavagupta plays with this dialectic of non-duality and manifestation when he says:

> The light is one, and it cannot ever be divided, and for this reason there is no possible division capable of sundering the non-duality, the Lord, beautiful with light and bliss. But (someone might object) space, time, forms, knowledge, qualities, attributes, distance, and so on are usually considered to be diversifying elements. Not so (we reply), because that which so appears is nothing but the light. If the light were not such, then non-duality would be useless. Difference then is only a word devoid of reality. But even if we admit a portion of reality to differences, then according to what we have said, it will have its basis only in non-duality. This is a pot, this is a cloth, the two are different one from the other. The two are different from other cognizing subjects, the two are different even from me. All these notions are nothing but the one light, which by its own intrinsic nature displays itself in this way.[50]

In terms of the philosophical categories of the theories of causation, Abhinavagupta propounds a doctrine of *satkāryavāda*, in which the effects, that is, manifestation, are preexistent in the cause, that is, Śiva. In addition, Kupetz has argued that Abhinavagupta's brand of *satkāryavāda* is most clearly categorized as *vivartavāda:* the effects do not transform the cause but are appearances (*vivarta*) within it.[51] Arguing a slightly different position, Alper contends that we should understand Abhinavagupta "as teaching a qualified—even if a highly qualified *pariṇāmavāda*."[52] Alper nicely identifies the ambiguities inherent in Abhinavagupta's system when he observes:

> [Abhinavagupta] wants to hold (with *pariṇāmavāda*) that the evolution of the cosmos is a real transformation taking place wholly within a single reality.

> At the same time he wants to hold (with *vivartavāda*, but without illusionism) that this real process of transformation represents a progressive decline in level of reality from the, as it were, most real to the least real. *Ābhāsavāda* is his attempt to devise a causal theory which will allow him to achieve this reconciliation. It seems to me that it is formulated not only in terms of the scholastic distinctions I have been discussing but also with an eye to Abhinava's particular understanding of liberation as *jīvanmukti*, and to the meditative and tantric practices believed to lead to it.[53]

It is precisely this meditative and tantric environment in which we are here immersed. The most important goal in the tantric portions of Abhinavagupta's texts is that of facilitating the acquisition of enlightenment. This goal is often served by a persistent flexibility that consistently seems to spill over the more rigid boundaries imposed by the categories of scholastic philosophical argumentation. As Alper has so eloquently put it:

> Does Abhinava have a system in the strict sense? I think so, though I am not certain. He does seem to have a coherent but unstated goal: *to encompass—without reconciling—contradictions, that is, to attempt to be faithful to the confusion of experience, to be consistent to inconsistency*.[54]

One might also say that Abhinavagupta's goal was the extremely tricky task of attempting to be faithful to the fluid and subtly shifting clarities of yogic perceptions and experiences, relating them to, but never attempting to straightjacket them in, the categories of technical philosophy.

In the *PTv* Abhinavagupta underscores the fluidity of his notion of non-duality by an interesting analogy. He says that the supreme consciousness (*parasaṃvid*) is both light (*bhāsa*) and self-consciousness (*vimarśa*). Therefore the objects that appear within it are perfectly nondifferentiated from this light of consciousness, just as water is within water or a flame is within a flame.[55] In the same text Abhinavagupta emphasizes the importance of these two notions by stating that they constitute the essence of Bhairava:

> At the beginning, reality consists only of a light (*prakāśa*) which gives life to the spontaneous self-consciousness (*vimarśa*). It is none other than the essence of Bhairava which is full of the state of the transcendent egoity, whose essence is the self-referential capacity of consciousness and the state of absolute freedom (*svātantrya*).[56]

In the *PTlv* Abhinavagupta explicitly identifies the Heart as the locality where one may find repose in the *prakāśa-vimarśa:*

For just as in the body, which is made up of all the principles and depends on various different parts, such as the skin, etc., that Heart is called the place where there is a repose in the pure light and pure consciousness, which is not different from the parts of the body; in the same way, the body of the Blessed Lord Bhairava, which is composed of various principles, worlds, etc., which has a universal form, has a self-referential consciousness as its essence, and is composed of the fifty phonemes, so the Heart is the very essence of that, and is a self-referential consciousness which is nondifferent from all the parts of the body.[57]

In the same text, the Heart is termed *sva-saṃvidrūpa*, an undifferentiated self-referential consciousness. It is for this reason that the Heart plays such a crucial soteriological role. Abhinavagupta says:

When the Heart is free of stains and a light occurs which illuminates the Supreme plane, by immersion in this shining light, one obtains identity with the Supreme Śiva, that is, with consciousness.[58]

In this verse Abhinavagupta has compressed the essence of the *Śāmbhavopāya*, the highest path for a return to Śiva.

As a final reference we may look at a verse from a later Shaiva text, the *Mahārtha-mañjarī*. Maheśvarānanda, the author of this twelfth century text, states:

Only the light of the Heart truly exists; in creative activity it is the active agent, and this activity, when it reposes in itself, is the self-referential capacity of consciousness, whereas when it begins to spread outwards it causes the manifestation of the universe.[59]

We shall now turn to the concept of *kula*, the Embodied Cosmos that appears as a result of the interaction of the Supreme Light and its continuous engagement with itself.

CHAPTER 5

The Heart as Embodied Cosmos: Kula

As the Embodied Cosmos that emerges from Śiva, the *kula* is the grand and complex structure of lived reality. It is the bodying forth, the giving of structure to that which transcends any structure. The term may also be applied to any relatively self-contained unit of manifestation within that lived reality, whether that unit be a universe, a world, a family, or an individual. Abhinavagupta equates the *kula* with the Heart in the introductory verse to the *PTv:*

> My Heart, which is composed of the emission of the quivering, flashing condition of the union of the Mother and the Father, whose body is full, which generates that concealed light which has five faces, producing the great and quite new manifestation, which is the abode of the stainless manifesting energies, because of its quivering and throbbing, is the Supreme, the immortal, the group (*kula*).[1]

This powerful verse compresses the great themes of the Kaula lineage: the Heart, the Supreme, the immortal, the Emissional Power, the union of Śiva and the Goddess, the five faces or aspects of Śiva, the linked powerful energies that yield manifestation, and the *kula*, the Embodied Cosmos. By examining the nature of the *kula*, we gain insight into the essential functioning of reality itself within the abode of the Heart.

In a terse, yet all-encompassing, statement, Abhinavagupta explains the relationship between the *kula* and the Supreme Lord:

> The *kula* is the power of Parameśvara, his strength, superiority, his freedom, his potency, his vigor, his mass, his consciousness, his body.[2]

Here we see the *kula* equated with the *śakti*, which is the strength and superiority of the Lord, and with his freedom, a central concept in the tradition's formulations. The power of the Lord continuously and freely expresses the infinity of Śiva in the variety of manifest forms that compose the *kula*. The two terms, *ojas* and *vīrya*, the potency and vigor of the Lord, reflect a distinctly masculine sexual imagery, which contrasts with the femininity of the term, *śakti*. The Lord emits the *kula;* he blissfully and unstintingly discharges it from within himself. The term *piṇḍa*, here rendered as mass, resonates with the ritual of offering a ball or lump of flour to the departed ancestors. The *kula* seems to function as a sustaining sacrificial offering that is rendered back to Śiva. Finally, the *kula* is said to be both the consciousness (*saṃvid*) and the body (*śarīra*) of the Lord.

If Śiva is the absolute totality, *kula* is a term that can be applied to any emergent manifestation from that totality. *Kula* seems to be applied on a sliding scale from the largest unit of manifestation to the smallest. This wide applicability of the term is possible because of the peculiar relationship of the absolute to each *kula*. When the absolute reality moves to manifest itself, it can only structure each part out of itself, that is, out of the whole. If there is only one reality, then any manifestation that emerges from that reality is essentially structured out of that reality. Moreover, even as the absolute appears to be rent, split, and divided by the manifestational process, these divisions do not manage to alter the essential status of Śiva as absolute. The vision of the Ultimate reality held by the tradition does not allow the totality of the absolute to be in any way impaired by the process of manifestation. Even as Śiva creates the very real game of breaking himself into parts which suffer transformation, division, extinction and emptiness, he is nevertheless able to maintain himself free of the game and intact as Śiva, all the while taking on the roles required by the game.

In the inconceivable enormity of Śiva's game, any self-contained unit—for example, our universe—may be termed a *kula*. The unit is self-sufficient precisely because it is a part that is structured out of wholeness. Since the *kula*'s essential reality is finally that wholeness which it has bodied forth, every unit, or *kula*, resonates in identity with every other structure composed of that wholeness. It is in this way that the human body, as a *kula*, resonates in identity with the entire universe.

This resonance might be explained as a kind of parallelism between a microcosm, the body, and a macrocosm, the universe itself. The notion of *kula*, however, tends to collapse the micro/macrocosm distinction. In a final sense, due to the indivisible nature of Śiva, microcosm and

macrocosm are simply indistinguishable. Wherever Śiva is present, the whole is present. If the body is a structure composed essentially of Śiva, then all that is manifested from Śiva, including the entire array of universes, may be found present in the body. Their presence in the body is not, it must be emphasized, as a microcosmic replica. The infinite reality out of which the array of universes are structured is present in the body, and thus they too are present in the body. This is the extreme to which the notion of non-duality is carried by the tradition.

These doctrines of the essential interconnection of all things within the *kula* represent a transcription of yogic experience. Horrifying as these doctrines may seem to the tidy logician for whom a thing is itself and nothing more, they nevertheless must be understood if we are to penetrate the tantric mode of thinking about reality.

Abhinavagupta tells us that the term *kula* is derivable from the root *kul*, which can mean a grouping together.[3] From this meaning we can derive one of the meanings of *kula*, a human grouping, namely a family. Even more specifically, *kula* can mean a spiritual family composed in the immediate present of the *guru*, his *śakti*, and his many disciples. *Kula* can then be extended into the past to refer to the larger spiritual family composed of the powerful lineage of teachers that extends as far back as Śiva himself. This lineage is unified by the sequential transmission of the achieved vision of the Ultimate.

In another meaning, the root implies condensation and solidification, *saṃstyāna*.[4] When the meanings of grouping and condensation coincide, the term refers to a group of condensed or solidified objects that have manifested from the Supreme, such as the vital breath, the organs of sense, and the material elements. Because these are the very elements that appear to superimpose finiteness and limitation on the infinite reality of Śiva, *kula* can then refer to that which binds, constricts and contracts consciousness. The bond that appears to bind and limit Śiva is itself a manifestation and condensation of the power of Śiva.[5] It is in this way that the term *kula* can refer to realities which are apparently diametrically opposed.

An important passage in the *PTv* discusses the term *kula* in relation to the Heart:

> The Heart, whose nature is consciousness, is the supreme resting place of all that exists such as blue, pleasure, and so on, as well as of the body, breath, intellect, etc. The power which consists of a sparkling vibration and which is in the Heart, by means of its own innate freedom creates artificial divisions such as the various cognitions, a pot, and so on. The power which is the Noble Lady of the group, that is of the body, breath, happiness, and so on, produces

> a state of pulsation, and thus becomes the energy of the wheel of deities such as Brahmī, etc. The power, whose form is the center of the center of the entire wheel of sense capacities and subtle conduits is of the nature of the *liṅga* and *karṇikā*, the place of birth. Right there in the group is the origin of that which takes on the form of the group, namely the power of the group *kaulikī*. Or else—that very power of the group is identical with that which is within that *kula*, namely the *kaula*, whose nature is essentially the *a-kula*. For the *kula* is produced from the light of the *a-kula*.[6]

The *kula*, the group or Embodied Cosmos, resides within the Heart, where it is overseen by the power of the group, the *kaulikī śakti*. This power is itself inherently inseparable from the Supreme. For this reason it is said to arise from the *a-kula*. The term *a-kula* can either be interpreted as that which is the nongroup or that which is the group of the *A*. In the first sense, it refers to Śiva who is intrinsically beyond the Embodied Cosmos, even if that cosmos arises within him. This reading of the term seems to emphasize Śiva's transcendence of the *kula*. In the second sense, *a-kula* is taken to mean the group of the *A*, namely the *anuttara* or Supreme. This is an eccentric but permissible use of what would usually be interpreted as a negative prefix.[7] This reading of the term seems to point once more to the inseparability of the *kula* and the Supreme. While the grammatical interpretation of the compound differs, the one being a *karmadhāraya*, the other a *tatpuruṣa* compound, in the final result these are simply two different ways of referring to the same absolute reality.

Abhinavagupta clarifies the distinction between *kaulikī* and *a-kula* in the following verse:

> The Supreme, *anuttara*, the Ultimate, the highest abode is called the non-group (*a-kula*). The emission is called the group (*kaulikī*) power of the Lord.[8]

A complementary statement occurs in the same chapter:

> The Lord's complete independence with regard to his being the Self of the universe is acknowledged as the highest understanding, the Goddess, the Supreme (*A*). That Supreme power of the Lord who is beyond the group (*a-kula*), is called *kaulikī* because it causes the group to be manifested, and the Lord is inseparable from that power.[9]

Once again, the dual-non-dual viewpoint provokes a subtle interplay in which distinctions are made and then carefully undercut. Padoux comments:

> Les termes de *kula* et d'*akula* en effect, lorsqu'ils sont appliqués à l'énergie, désignent celle-ci sous sa forme la plus haute, inséparable de Śiva, pure énergie

de la conscience *citśakti*. L'énergie de *kula* est propre à la catégorie de la pleine conscience suprême (*pūrṇaparasaṃvittattvalakṣaṇa*) où apparaissent et disparaissent les univers et elle naît d'*akula* qui est la même énergie, mais envisagée sous un aspect dont la transcendance est plus nettement affirmée.[10]

The long passage translated above from the *PTv* occurs in the comment to the second *śloka* of the *PT*. Slight differences occur in the Sanskrit text of the two published versions of this text, that is, as it is found in the *PTlv* and the *PTv*.[11] One of the revealing differences occurs as follows. *Śloka* 2b in the *PTlv* reads: "hṛdayasthā tu yā śaktiḥ kauli*n*ī kulanāyikā," whereas *śloka* 2b in the *PTv* reads: hṛdayasthā tu yā śaktiḥ kauli*k*ī kula-nāyikā." The entire verse (*ślokas* 2b-3a:) may be rendered as:

Reveal to me that power which abides in the Heart, known as the *kaulinī*, the noble Lady of the group. O Lord of Gods, reveal to me that by means of which I may obtain satisfaction, the 'I'.

The *PTlv* version contains the reading *kaulinī*, a feminine adjectival form meaning something like "relating to the *kula*." This reading seems at first glance to be a simple misreading for several reasons. First, the *Śāradā N* is fairly close to a *K*. Given even a slightly careless transcription of manuscripts, it is conceivable that the two phonemes might be confused. Thus, we could easily imagine that this reading results from a simple scribal error. Secondly, the *PTv* reading, *kaulikī śakti*, is a phrase that occurs numerous times in the texts, whereas *kaulinī* does not seem to be repeated except in the comment to this verse in the *PTlv*.

On the other hand, we may be encountering here not so much a mistake as a deliberate pun. In the first place, in terms of meaning there is no recognizable difference between the two terms. So *kaulinī* may simply be an accepted variant for the more common *kaulikī*. Secondly, *kaulinī* may have been preferred because the expression which follows it, *kula-nāyikā*, can then be taken as a kind of gloss on it. Specifically, the term *nāyikā*, translated here as "noble Lady," can also mean "mistress" or "courtesan." This term is derivable from the root *nī*, to lead. The ending *-nī*, which can be seen at the end of the word *kaulinī*, is grammatically the feminine adjectival ending. However, the reading *kaulinī* may have been chosen because the *-nī* ending conveniently coincides with the root *nī*, from which the term *nāyikā* is derived. So the adjective *kaulinī* may have been preferred because it served to compress neatly the term *kulanāyikā*. In addition, it may have been preferred as alluding more directly at once to the Goddess who leads and presides over manifest reality, as well as to her human instantiation who presides over the secret ritual.

The only other occurrence of the simple term *kula* in the *PT* verses is to be found in *śloka* 20a: "*śākinī-kula-sāmānya*," or "He becomes equal to the family or troop of Śākinī-s." Here we are prompted by Abhinavagupta's comment to interpret Śākinī not as a lower group of mythological female deities, but as the *devatācakra*, the very highest wheel or circle of deities itself.[12] In the comment to the verses 2b-3a above, Abhinavagupta explains why the *śakti* is to be called *kaulinī:*

> The power which resides in the Heart of consciousness is freedom itself. The purpose of its creative activity is the group (*kula*), the entire range of perceiving subject, perceived object, and process of perception. Thus it is called *kaulinī*—having to do with the group. She is the noble Lady of that constructed group, she rules over it. By knowing it, she causes its manifestation, as well as reabsorbing it in herself. Reveal that power to me, lead me on the path of reflexive awareness, so that, when that power is transformed into a firm cognition in my awareness, I may attain contentment of both kinds, enjoyment and liberation, a contentment whose nature is of the consciousness of all beings, that is, the 'I'.[13]

The initial query of the Goddess in *śloka* 1, "O Lord, how can the Ultimate of its own accord grant the *kaulika* perfection," coupled with the request in verses 2b-3a that the *kaulinī śakti* be revealed to her, represents, according to Abhinavagupta, the very cry of the unawakened but powerful consciousness that is about to encounter its own deepest potentiality in the Heart. When the Goddess, here questioning Bhairava about herself, about the *kaulinī śakti*, has achieved her awakening, then she has also awakened to her continual status of identity with Bhairava and so she, who has become him, is able to answer her own question. To insist upon the still-nagging question—how does she achieve awakening before she has been instructed by Bhairava, who cannot instruct her until she has awakened to her identity with him—is to introduce a fallacious and inappropriate element of temporal precedence and sequence that is wholly absent from this divine interaction.[14]

The question the Goddess is posing amounts to a request for instruction in the *Śāmbhavopāya*, the direct plunge into the Ultimate reality of the Heart. This highest of methods for realization does not actually involve a method as such, but represents rather the simple and unmediated operation by which finite realities spontaneously and continuously recover their true status as absolute. The Goddess wishes to know how this process can bring the highest possible realization to the embodied cosmos, the *kula*—how it can bring the perfection known as the *kaulika*.

> How, in what way, does He, of his own accord, freely, "give," that is to say,

> produce, the manifestation intelligible to both organs of sense and action of the *kaulika*, produce the perfection of the *kaulika*, which is the sum total of the group consisting of the ever-new bodies, senses, worlds? Moreover, the spiritual perfections are obtained by the practice of the *yoga* of the vital breath etc., by a series of practices such as concentration etc. How can the Ultimate, which is devoid of temporal succession and is only consciousness, grant the *kaulika* perfection, linked to temporal succession, by the mere knowing of which, one would obtain the nature of the Goddess?[15]

The response she obtains from Bhairava is, on one level, a simple restatement of her question:

> The Lord Bhairava said:
> Hear, O Goddess, O One of great fortune, about the higher than the highest and also about the highest. I will describe to you the Ultimate so that no doubt remains, the Ultimate which grants the *kaulika* perfection. That *kaulika* function, O Goddess, abides in the great space of my Heart.
> (*commentary on 3b-4:*)
> The Ultimate grants that *kaulika* perfection, that is to say, it manifests, etc., everything, and has as its aim the contentment which consists of both enjoyment and emancipation. I shall describe that Ultimate to you, which is to say I shall lead you to realize it directly in your Heart. In this way, as soon as you have succeeded in understanding, you will be free from doubt about this forever. (The pronoun *ayam* is employed to indicate that the *kaulika* function is apparent to all.) Indeed, that *kaulika* function resides in the ether of my Heart, where its nature is consciousness, and it is always known as being in the Heart.[16]

In this response Bhairava introduces a new term, the *kaulika-vidhi*, rendered here as the *kaulika* function. The word *vidhi* can mean a command or rule, a procedure or method, a means, an action. Within the very nature of the Heart, in the great space of the Heart, resides a procedure for the direct realization of the nature of the Heart, and this is the *kaulika* function. The nature of the Heart functions to manifest the realities known collectively as the *kula.* Manifestation does not exhaust its purpose, however. It continuously functions to bring these realities to perfection again. Abhinavagupta describes the expansion of the *kaulika-vidhi* further on in the *PTlv:*

> Thus, the *kaulika* function which is truly contained in my Heart, where it is identical with consciousness, now, that is, without interruption, constantly, begins to spread by the power of the cognition of objectivity.[17]

We have seen that the Heart is the Ultimate and that it is also the center. In connection with this *kaulika* function, the term *madhya* might

also profitably be rendered as "junction point." *Madhya* is that point from which the finite realities emerge from the Ultimate and also continuously dissolve back into the Ultimate. This threshold function of the Heart makes of it a kind of paradoxical no-man's-land, a boundary which, because it shares and participates simultaneously in the characteristics of the Ultimate and of the finite realities, is also somehow different from either one of those conditions.

This condition of liminality is the precise nature of the Heart. Here the finite realites of the *kula* are dissolved back into the *a-kula*, that is, they lose their finite characteristics and are resolved back into Śiva, into the infinite. One might properly say both that they are destroyed into nothingness and that they are expanded into the totality. In either case, their structure as finite realities per se disappears.

However, the power of the *kula* can also function as the *kaulikī śakti* to bring a perfection and expansion of the finite realities in such a way that they do not apparently lose their characteristics and structures as finite realities. This situation occurs in the specific case of the finite self, the *aṇu*. The *aṇu*, or atomic self, represents clearly this liminal condition referred to above. Standing at the center between the infinity of Śiva and the inertia of matter, it is able to mediate the transformation of the finite into the infinite. Because the *aṇu* represents that contraction of the Ultimate where Śiva recovers consciousness of himself, it may feed on the abundance and plenitude of the Ultimate and expand to a state of perfection and fulfillment while still maintaining its finite boundaries. This is the attainment of satisfaction (*tṛpti*) which is described as bringing both enjoyment and liberation (*bhukti-mukti*).[18]

Abhinavagupta explicitly identifies the *kaulikī śakti* with the *visarga*, the Emissional Power.[19] It is the harnessing of the Emissional Power that constitutes the essential method for liberation for the tradition. Under either reading, *kaulikī* or *kaulinī*, this *śakti* represents another term for the *visarga*, the Emissional Power, the manifestational energy. The *visarga* represents the central divine dyad which is simultaneously and continuously expansive and contractive in nature. Both the *kaulikī śakti* and the *visarga* are directly linked with the *vimarśa*, the self-referential capacity of consciousness. Thus, the highest power that rules over the entire manifestation revolves in utter simplicity around the inherent freedom and spontaneity of consciousness.

Abhinavagupta describes the nature of the *kula* in the following way:

> It is within the *kula* that the *kaulikī siddhi* arises and it is formed of bliss. . . .
> It is identical with the self-referential capacity of Śiva whose characteristic
> is the supreme consciousness whose nature is the Heart. For indeed the *kula*,

> because it is identical with the essential self of the Supreme, grants that perfection. *Kula* is termed the circle of rays of the splendor of the supreme Lord Bhairava made of the abundance of his own light. When this *kula* achieves cessation characterized by coming into identity with the interiorized consciousness of Bhairava, then it is nothing but the supreme beyond space and time, consisting of the enjoyment of the nectar, the immortal supreme bliss, the immovable, which takes on the form of the Emissional always and everywhere present.[20]

The identification of the *kaulikī siddhi* with the *vimarśa* in this passage is important. In the *PTlv*, Abhinavagupta distinguishes between the *anuttara* and the *kaulikī siddhi* by saying that the former consists entirely of an undivided self-referential consciousness (*avibhāga-parāmarśa*). The latter opens the way for distinct and specific cognitions (*vibhāga-parāmarśa*), the finite realities, which are formed of the fifty specific cognitions described in some detail in this portion of the commentary:

> Thus, the power which abides in the Heart is, above all, formed of an undivided self-referential consciousness. Then, that power, by its own innate freedom formed of the Ultimate *A*, turns itself into distinct cognitions whose form is the *kaulikasiddhi*.[21]

It becomes clear however, that the function of the *kaulika siddhi* is not limited to the attainment of this outward manifestation of finite realities. Further on in the *PTlv*, the *kaulikī siddhi* is equated to the condition of *jīvan-mukti:*

> He is united with this Heart as soon as this has appeared before him. The state of liberation of one who is still alive, characterized by an absorption into the pair of the Śrī Bhairava, is precisely this attainment of the Heart. As soon as it appears, the Ultimate (*A*), which is formed of consciousness only, grants the highest *kaulika* perfection, which is precisely a state of liberation while one is still alive.[22]

The notion of *kaulikī siddhi* can be interpreted in several ways. On one level, the *siddhi* or accomplishment of the *kula* is simply the full-blown manifestation composed of the fifty principles. This is the expansion of Śiva's nature, his play, which involves the concealment of Śiva from himself. On another level, *kaulikī siddhi* can refer to the extraordinary capacities (*vibhūti*) that can be made to operate within the *kula*, that is, within the achieved experience of the body/cosmos. Finally, *kaulikī siddhi* represents the highest condition of the liberated being, the *jīvanmukta*, who has successfully embodied in his own awareness the totality of the Heart, of

the *kula*, the manifested cosmos, the power of Śiva, as well as the very unboundedness of Śiva, the primordial consciousness itself.[23]

The Divine Pair in Union

Abhinavagupta describes the Lord and the power as being united in the *kula:*

> *Kula* being Śiva and *śakti* united together, the perfection of the powers manifests itself as liberation in this very life.[24]

We encounter here the notion of a divine pair perpetually united in the Heart, the Lord and Lady of the *kula: Kuleśitṛ*, the Supreme, *A* and *Kuleśvarī, AṂ*.[25] Whereas the emphasis of the term *anuttara* remains on a powerful non-duality, a perpetually unificatory reality which cannot be broken or divided in any way, this is a new formulation. On the basis of this unsunderable reality, the tradition feels free to posit the functioning of two interactive poles of reality within the Heart. While these poles do not break up or divide the unity in any way, it is necessary to posit them as mutually united yet somehow differentiable aspects of the functioning of the Ultimate. As a result of this union manifestation is able to occur:

> The twinned form of Śiva and *śakti* is known as the union. It is termed the power of bliss (*Ā*) because the entire universe is emitted by it. That reality which is higher than the highest and the lowest, is called the Goddess, that reality is the essence, the Heart, the supreme Emissional Power of the Lord.[26]

Once again the curious manifestation of grammalogues comes into play. The *yāmala*, "twinned form," represents the union of the Supreme with itself. This union can be represented as the summation of *A* + *A* which yields, by the traditional rules of Sanskrit *saṃdhi*, the phoneme *Ā*. *Ā* is the grammalogue for *ānanda*, bliss. It is therefore not unexpected that the *yāmala* or *saṃghaṭṭa* should be termed the power of bliss. As the Supreme doubles back on itself, a rubbing or clashing together, a friction or collision, a union or junction of itself with itself, a self-embrace occurs. These are the patently sexual meanings of the term *saṃghaṭṭa* employed here on a metaphysical level.[27] The absolute consciousness doubles back on itself as part of its inherent and continuous nature, the *vimarśa* aspect of the absolute. This doubling back on itself generates a blissful creativity, a blissful power that generates the entire universe. This is the blissful nature of the Emissional Power.

The union of the Father and the Mother that occurs in the Heart and the *kula* may be interpreted on many levels.[28] In the Heart abides that fertile and paradoxical coexistence of the Supreme and the power that will manifest finite realities. This productive reality is seen in terms of a duality of powers, a duality that does not divide the essential non-duality of the Supreme, yet is capable of causing the Supreme to flow forth in creativity.

On another level, the *kula* may be interpreted in relation to the human situation. The *kula* can represent any self-sufficient or autonomous structure manifested from the absolute. We have also seen that while the term *kula* can apply to the body, that is, the individual, it is more often found as applying to a family, the grouping of individuals. This may be understood as follows: each individual presents the appearance of an autonomous structure comprising body, mind, and personality. Nevertheless, the individual human being as a finite structure is not in fact a completely self-sufficient unit. In terms of the origin of this structure, it arises from the union of man and woman. In order to replicate itself, the finite body must be joined with another body. Male and female must unite. The united male and female represent a self-replicating staging point in manifestation from which the *kula* as body, or rather as human family, may perpetually renew and maintain itself.

Thus, for the tradition, it is especially in the union of male and female, that human beings physically embody the dyadic wholeness of Śiva. It is no accident that sexual union represents an especially powerful instantiation of the cosmic processes of manifestation that result from the activation of the *prakāśa-vimarśa* dyad. Similarly, the ritual of sexual union, the *cakra-pūjā* or *śakti-cakra*, seems to have been designed to resonate with the very foundational energies of the universe.

The Kaula lineage conceived of the secret ritual as a physical embodiment of the primordial energy nexus of Śiva and *śakti*. The physical acting out of the circle of pairs surrounding the central pair in union replicates, on the physical level, the God and Goddess perpetually united and surrounded by the circle of powers. This ritual attempts to capture, magnify, and transmit the essential Emissional Power of the universe. It was thought that the powerful, liberating, and beneficent force of consciousness itself radiated outward from the central dyad of male and female in union. The reunited totality on the level of the body was seen as resonating with the totality inherent in each unit of manifestation, as well as with the *a-kula*, the unembodied totality beyond the inhabited and divided manifestational cosmos.[29]

The *kula*, seen here as the unit of male and female, is a complete unit, is, then, a wholeness that is capable of replicating itself, and which thus

may be termed the divine family. This concept is often rendered by the term *yāmala*, the twinned form. The Emissional Power is frequently referred to as the *Rudra-yāmala:*

> Therefore, the phoneme *Ḥ*, the *visarga*, is termed the *Rudra-yāmala*, the Rudra-dyad, because it consists of both the supreme Śiva and *śakti*, of the rest and activity which constitute the Union of Bhairava with his Beloved.[30]

The Heart is conceived as the site of the union of the two, whether the two be the primordial spiritual forces of divinity or two human beings. Thus the Heart may be rightly interpreted as the generative abode: we may even correctly speak of a genital Heart. In this connection, two terms, the *liṅga* and the *yoni*, require examination. In addition, the notion of *yoni* will lead us from the symbolism of the two to the three, with its stable geometrical form, the triangle.

Liṅga

In the *TĀ* Abhinavagupta describes the *liṅga* in the following way:

> This *liṅga*, the Heart of the *yoginī*, beautiful with bliss, generates an extraordinary form of consciousness, due to the union of the seed and the womb. All the hosts of divinities dwell, without any effort whatsoever, in this abode full of bliss, and their nature is an unfailing form of consciousness. Here shines the paradoxical potency of Bhairava which continuously expands and contracts, while Bhairava himself is beyond all expansion and contraction. The totality of all that is poured out by the streams of bliss which occur by the union of the *liṅga* with that (*yoni*), is continuously and perpetually renewing itself.[31]

What is the meaning of the assertion that the *liṅga* is the very Heart of the *yoginī*, the *yoginīhṛdaya*? This rather mysterious assertion links the most common emblem of Śiva, the *liṅga* or phallic mark, with the Heart. It refers to the union of the *liṅga*, the phallic pillar of light, with the *guha*, the vaginal abyss of darkness, a union which occurs in the Heart.

The notion of the *liṅga* in the Heart may be read in at least three ways. On the cosmic level, the *liṅga* is the massed and powerful consciousness of Śiva as he is about to release the universe into manifestation. We recognize here the Emissional Power of Śiva which, continuously expanding and contracting, releases into being the seed-cognitions it harbors within itself. On another level, that of the yogic practice, the *liṅga* in the Heart alludes to the practice of meditative absorption, which will be clarified

when we explore further on the imagery of the cave (*guha*). Anticipating this discussion, we might initially read the process as *guha-samāveśa*—absorption into the cave, where that phrase yields a dual meaning. On the inner level of tantric practice, it may be interpreted as alluding to the yogic immersion in the cave of consciousness. On the external level of tantric ritual, it may be seen as describing the ritualistic penetration of the phallus into the vaginal cave. This superimposition of meanings, it need hardly be said, is not accidental. Thus the *yoginī*, the Goddess, is penetrated by Śiva, has Śiva as her very Heart, has Śiva in her very core. Bhairava is the self of the Goddess, he is inseparable from her, he is perpetually united to her.

In a gloss on the term *liñga*, Abhinavagupta underscores the cosmic level of interpretation of the notion of *liñga:*

> All this is dissolved (*līnam*) in that and all this is perceived (*gamyate*) as reposing within that. Such is the characteristic of the Bhairava consciousness with its completely full powers.[32]

The true power within the Heart is the consciousness of Bhairava within which all is dissolved and on which everything else reposes. This power is the *liñga* or true characteristic mark of the Supreme. This power, doubling back upon itself, expanding and contracting, pours itself out in streams of bliss. This emission is perpetually renewing itself, and in this way manifestation is continuously being maintained. The *liñga* is the symbol of the expansive, creative force (*vīrya, ojas*). It also proclaims the withheld and unemitted semen of Śiva, and of the *yogin* who takes Śiva as his ideal. By imitating the supremely stable (*dhruva*) reality that abides beyond expansion and contraction, beyond emission, the *yogin* can empower his consciousness for the journey of return to Śiva.

We can reconsider in this light a passage in which Abhinavagupta describes the nature of the power in the Heart:

> The power which consists of a sparkling vibration and which is in the Heart, by means of its own innate freedom, creates artificial divisions such as the various cognitions, a pot and so on. The power which is the noble Lady of the group, that is of the body, breath, happiness and so on, produces a state of pulsation and thus becomes the energy of the wheel of deities such as Brahmī, etc. The power whose form is the center of the center of the entire wheel of sense capacities and subtle conduits is of the nature of the *liñga* and *karṇikā*, the place of birth.[33]

The *śakti* that resides at the center of the center of awareness is said to have

as its nature the *liṅga* and the *karṇikā*. The term *karṇikā* literally means the "pericarp of a lotus." We have seen that the Heart is often spoken of in terms of a lotus flower. Thus, the choice of imagery, the *liṅga* and the *karṇikā*, as opposed to a more standard *liṅga* and *yoni*, is meant perhaps to underscore a reference to the cosmic birthplace, rather than a simple allusion to the vulva. Of course, the lotus and the *yoni* are also directly linked. In any case, we arrive at a symbolic complex that combines lotus/vulva/heart into a dense network of meaning. Let us now consider the notion of *yoni* in a more detailed fashion.

E, Yoni, Trikoṇa

We can best approach the notion of *yoni* by recalling that the Heart is equated with the triangle (*trikoṇa*). Abhinavagupta tells us:

> O Lady with beautiful hips! The Heart is the subtle vibration of the triangle which consists of the incessant expansion and contraction of the three powers, and it is the place of repose, the place of supreme bliss. This very Heart is the Self of Bhairava, of that which is the essence of Bhairava, and of the blessed supreme Goddess who is inseparable and nondifferent from him.[34]

This initially puzzling association links one of the names for the tradition, Trika or triple, with its most important symbol, the Heart. In fact, one of the important texts quoted by Abhinavagupta in his *TĀ* is entitled the *Trika-hṛdaya*. There is a deeper meaning lurking here, however. We have alluded to the identification of the Heart with the cave or abyss (*guha*). We have also seen the link made between the cave, the Heart, and the female sexual organ. It happens that in the *Nāgarī* script (as well as in the Kashmiri *Śāradā* script), the vowel *E* looks very much like an isoceles triangle with its apex pointing downwards. This emblematic association with the female sexual organ causes the vowel *E* to become known as the *trikoṇa-bīja*, triangle-vowel, or *yoni-bīja*, vagina-vowel. The Heart, the triangle, the *yoni*, and the vowel *E*, are all linked with the Goddess, with the *śakti*, with the female power of sexuality, fertility, and reproduction.

As the first of the diphthongs that emerge in the process by which the so-called lunar stations evolve out of Śiva, the vowel *E* results from the union of the Supreme *A* or the Bliss *Ā* with the Will *I*. It is said to be "beautiful with the fragrance of the Emission."[35]

As is so often the case with tantric symbolism, there are at least three levels of possible interpretation of the *yoni:* the level of cosmic manifestation, the level of ordinary life, and the level of the tantric-yogic practice.

Often, however, the level of symbolism of the cosmic manifestation and that of the tantric-yogic practice coincide. This occurs because often these two levels represent complementary aspects of the single process of manifestation, the former being applied in the direction of the emergence of manifestation and the latter being applied in the direction of the return of manifestation to Śiva.

In terms of the *yoni-bīja*, Jayaratha intertwines aspects of all three levels of interpretation when he gives this gloss on the meaning of the triangle:

> The term *trikoṇa* indicates this vowel's aspect of being the receptacle of birth, in other words the mouth of the *yoginī* (*yoginīvaktra*). It is there that the supreme power arises. As it is said: "when it shines forth from the triangular seat with a crooked form," and also "the triangle is termed *bhaga*, vagina, *yoni*, vulva, the hidden circle which stands in the middle with the energies of will, knowing and action forming each angle, and emitting the sound *ciñcinī*." Even in ordinary life the place of birth is the place of the highest bliss because of the violent discharge associated with the production of the bliss of Emission.[36]

The *trikoṇa* is interpreted on the level of cosmic manifestation when it is described as being composed of three powers, each forming an angle of the triangle. It is interpreted on the level of the tantric-yogic practice when it is lauded as the source of the powerfully salvational energy which is crooked (*kuṭilarūpiṇī*), a clear allusion to the *kuṇḍalinī* energy. Finally, on the level of ordinary life, the *trikoṇa* is both the place of sexual intercourse and birth.

The level of cosmic manifestation is very important here. In terms of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva scheme of the female potencies or powers of Śiva, each of the three *śakti*-s is respectively associated with a corner (*koṇa*) of the inverted triangle: the *icchā-śakti*, the willing or desiring of Śiva; the *jñāna-śakti*, the cognitive function of Śiva; and the *kriyā-śakti*, the active-creative function of Śiva. This triad of powers is the triple function of the Heart of Śiva, by means of which Śiva is free to create, enjoy, and destroy the myriad universes that appear in the great ocean of consciousness. This triple function reduplicates on the level of ordinary life as our finite capacities for willing, knowing and acting.

We have already considered Somānanda's analysis of the intermingling of these three powers in the Heart and his attempt to link the experience of balance between the three powers to everyday experiences, as in the case of receiving good news, or feeling unexpected fear. Somānanda says:

> When Śiva is in the form of an absorption in the experience of his conscious beatitude to the exclusion of all else—in this state, indeed, He is at once will, knowledge, and action—then these three powers which are in their most subtle

form, are in a state of perfect union with Him. In this state Śiva is freed from distinctions, resolved in His conscious beatitude, in His supreme form.[37]

These three powers form part of another list of five powers, namely the power of consciousness (*cit-śakti*), whose nature is light (*prakāśa*); the power of bliss, (*ānanda-śakti*), whose nature is freedom (*svātantrya*); the power of will (*icchā-śakti*), which is astonishment (*camatkāra*); the power of knowledge (*jñāna-śakti*), composed of the capacity for conscious thought; and the power of action (*kriyā-śakti*), which is the capacity to assume all forms.[38]

Yet another way of dividing these powers, perhaps the one preferred by Abhinavagupta, is in terms of the first three vowels, *A I U*, which represent the powers of the Supreme, the Will, and the Opening. These are praised by Abhinavagupta as "the supreme effulgence of Bhairava, the power of the Supreme Lord in all its fullness."[39] In fact, this triad is said to be the most basic configuration from which the pentadic classification arises. This pentadic classification in turn leads to the first triad we considered, that of the *icchā, jñāna* and *kriyā śakti*-s. Abhinavagupta explains this process as follows:

Finally, these pentads are resolved back into the Ultimate, *A*. In this way, the Emissional Power expands with a form that extends from the lunar stations beginning with *A*, to the pentad of *brahman*. This is the wheel of powers of the Lord, of Bhairava, a wheel which is an uninterrupted continuous series. For the five powers of consciousness, bliss, will, knowledge, and action, which are made of the five elemental powers, are, in effect, the powers of consciousness placed in the triangle, namely the Ultimate, the Will and the Unfolding (*A I U*), which then unfold into a five-fold division.[40]

The triangle is the great secret of the Heart about which the Goddess asks to be enlightened.[41] Abhinavagupta describes the triangle as the "undifferentiated state of the distinctions of the knower, known and process of knowing."[42] We will consider later on the significance of this triad when we see it in relation to the fire, sun, and moon. In the following passage this same triad, as well as several others, is linked to the triangle:

The *yoni*, which is triangular, is nothing other than this flower. The blessed *bhairavīmudrā* linked to Parameśvara consists of the triangle, distinct and evident, of the perceived object, which is to say the sun, the moon, the fire, of manifestation, maintenance, and reabsorption, of *iḍā, piñgalā*, and *suṣumnā*, of lawfulness, unlawfulness, and both together. This triangle is called *yoni*, source, matrix, womb, vagina, because it is the support of the womb which has a triangular form. As it is said in the *Kubjikāmata*, in the section that

treats the *Khaṇḍacakra:* "Above the *māyā* is the great *māyā* (an intermediary *tattva* between *māyā* and *śuddhavidyā*), whose form is the triangle of bliss."[43]

Triśūla

Another important triangular concept is the *triśūla*, the trident, which is the weapon of Śiva. This is also the name given to the fourteenth vowel, *AU*. Here is Abhinavagupta's description of this vowel in the *TĀ:*

> It is for this reason that at this particular stage—the fourteenth—the three powers of willing, knowing and acting are all fully evident. In the *Śrī Pūrva*, the Lord calls this stage the trident. The teachers who disclose the truth have also termed this phoneme the unmanifest (*nirañjana*). The trident is thus nothing more than this triad of powers in a state of fusion and balance (*lolībhūtam*). As a result of absorption in this trident the yogin quickly achieves a condition of being unmanifest.[44]

We have just examined a passage from the *Śiva-dṛṣṭi* in which Somānanda states that the Supreme, the most subtle form of Śiva, occurs when these three powers are perfectly united with him in an undifferentiated fashion. Thus it is not surprising that the *triśūla*, which corresponds to the state of fusion of the three powers, should be termed the Unmanifest.

In the *PTlv* Abhinavagupta puts the matter in a slightly different way. Since the power of action manifests itself fully at the stage of the trident, then of necessity, he says, the other two powers are also present there. This is also essentially what Jayaratha says in his comment to the passage of the *TĀ* that describes the trident. As Abhinavagupta puts it:

> The fourteenth vowel (*AU*) abounds in the perfectly full ultimate (*A*) and bliss (*Ā*), and which is possessed of expansion (*U*) and diminution (*Ū*)—which are the body of the completely full power of action. The other two powers, the power of knowledge and the power of will, are compressed within that fourteenth vowel by means of the power of action.[45]

Further on in the *PTlv* Abhinavagupta again emphasizes the inseparable connection of these three powers:

> Since, in reality, that state of mere being is not different from the true nature of such powers—what remains is the true nature of the power. That power is either will, action, or knowledge, because nothing at all can appear without reposing on the power of such self-referential consciousness which is "I will," "I act," and "I know." In the thought "I will" are intermixed the three powers—

> and in the same way in "I know," and "I act," because they are inseparably connected. Therefore, that which is becoming manifest appears as reposed in the own-nature which is composed of the triad of powers. The true nature of this triad of powers is one, namely freedom, and because of this freedom, a true body made of two dots, formed of two knots, one above and one below, a body of made of consciousness, whose nature is the supreme deity, Bhairava.[46]

In a later chapter we shall analyze the two important *mantra*-s associated with the Heart. It is not out of place here to remark, however, that it is no accident that the central vowel in each of these *mantra*-s is a triangular vowel: the *yoni, E,* is the vowel in the so-called Heart of dissolution (*hṛdaya-saṃhāra*), and the *triśūla, AU* is the vowel in the so-called Heart of manifestation (*hṛdaya-sṛṣṭi*).[47] The vowels form the central, pulsating core of the *mantra*-s they animate, and stand in both cases for the triad of powers that abides in the Heart, the three rulers (*Trīśikā*-s) of the title of the *PTlv*. We shall now turn to a consideration of the notions of vibration (*spanda*) and Emission (*visarga*).

CHAPTER 6

The Heart: Vibration and Emissional Power

The Heart as Vibration: Spanda

In the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition the notion of *spanda*, vibration, goes back to two early figures, Vasugupta and Kallaṭa. While Abhinavagupta never seems to have commented on the texts of the Spanda branch composed by these two masters, the term *spanda* occurs frequently in his writings. For example, when he clarifies the nature of the vital energy that empowers individual life he says:

> The power of the vital breath animated by an effort, an activating, inciting exertion, and by an internal desire, is variously termed the vibration (*spanda*), the trembling light, the repose, the life, the Heart, the illumination.[1]

In the same text he gives a clear definition of *spanda:*

> The nature of such a consciousness is its capacity for self-referral, and because of that, there always arises a spontaneous sound (*dhvani*) which is termed the supreme, the great Heart. That self-consciousness in the Heart in which the entire universe without remainder is dissolved, present at the beginning and at the end of perception of objects, is called in the authoritative texts the vibration (*spanda*), and more precisely, the universal vibration (*sāmānya-spanda*), and its nature is an overflowing in the Self. For that vibration, which is a slight motion of a special kind, a unique vibrating light, is the wave of the ocean of consciousness, without which there is no consciousness at all. For the character of the ocean is that it is sometimes filled with waves and sometimes waveless. This consciousness is the essence of all. The insentient

universe has consciousness as its essence, because its very foundation is dependent on that, and its essence is the great Heart.[2]

Abhinavagupta begins by underscoring the inherent capacity for self-referral (*vimarśa*) that is, according to the tradition, the essential characteristic of consciousness. This doubling back of consciousness on itself does not represent a separate moment in consciousness, but is rather a continuous and inescapable component of consciousness, intrinsic to the sheer appearance of consciousness (*prakāśa*). This self-referring capacity of consciousness causes a spontaneous sound that is equated with the great Heart. It is in the Heart that the entire universe is dissolved in a self-consciousness which is known as the *spanda*, vibration. The specific nature of this vibration is an overflowing in the Self. This overflowing creates a very slight motion, a peculiar vibration of the light of consciousness, which in turn sets up the wave function of consciousness. Abhinavagupta emphasizes that these waves are an essential component of the fundamental existence of consciousness.

In this passage, as well as in many others, a series of richly descriptive terms occurs that conveys the subtle motion within the absolute reality that is termed *spanda*. The terms *sphuraṇa, sphurita*, and *sphurattā* all derive from the root *sphur*, and convey a sense of something that throbs, trembles, quivers, or twitches. The meaning of these terms is complicated by the additional semantic component of light: that which throbs is also a light. In addition, *sphuraṇa* can mean flashing, glittering, gleaming, glistening, twinkling or sparkling. From these meanings we can derive the simpler and less descriptive sense of something that shines, and therefore something that is evident or manifest, something that "is."

The term *prakāśa*, which means "to shine forth," may be simplified to the rather undescriptive "that which appears." So also *sphurita*, quivering, glistening, sparkling, may be simplified to the rather unimaginative "that which is" or "being." However, while these renderings correctly transcribe one of the denotations of these terms, they also succeed in stripping them of most of their descriptive power.

Terms such as *sphuraṇa, prakāśa*, and many others were chosen by the tradition to convey experiential elements of the yogic experience. They attempt to render some of the vividness and mysterious fascination of the process of *sādhanā*, of the experiences of entrance into the supreme. It seems that the tradition chose such a powerfully descriptive vocabulary precisely in order to emphasize what may be termed the "yogic-descriptive" aspect of the tradition. This language may be contrasted with the vocabulary prevalent in the more philosophical aspects of the tradition. That vocabulary, though no less complex nor less densely packed with semantic

components, seems to be designed to highlight what may be termed the "logical-ascriptive" aspect of the tradition. The yogic-descriptive and logical-ascriptive perspectives form two distinct, though often intermingled, aspects of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition.

Another descriptive term, *uccalana*, rendered as "an overflowing," conveys the sense of a continuous dynamism within the absolute reality, a perpetual movement toward itself. This internal dynamism serves as the source for the external movement that results in the process of manifestation. The term *dhvani*, rendered as "sound," conveys the internal resonance, the primordial hum that is set up by this movement within the Ultimate reality. *Udyoga*, an activating inciting exertion, shows the internal power of the absolute reality, a power silently amassing for a ferocious unleashing, a power tremblingly experienced by the *yogin* who enters into the majesty of Bhairava.[3]

The silence of the Supreme is shot through with a creative tension, a primordial urge, an impelling force. This force is the *śakti*, the power of the Ultimate, which sets up an agitation (*ghūrṇana*), even a disturbance (*kṣobha*), which is responsible for the wave motion within the absolute. Thus, the absolute is continually arising into waves which create the slight and imperceptible movement or vibration that characterizes consciousness, and which allows consciousness to be the foundation and essence of all manifest reality.

It is important to emphasize that this movement occurs within the fundamental core of the Ultimate: it forms the essential feature of Ultimate reality according to the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. It can in no way jeopardize the status of the Ultimate as absolute. To wish to define the Ultimate reality as a silence that transcends all characterizations would be to distort and demote the absolute into a powerless and useless ultimate. Such an ultimate would be totally appeased (*śānta*), but would also be incapable of serving as the essence of the finite. The *spanda*, the internal movement of the Heart of Śiva, rescues the absolute from a kind of pristine but static inertia.

Abhinavagupta describes the essential characteristic of the *spanda* as a contraction and expansion (*saṃkoca-vikāsa*) as well as an opening and a closing (*unmeṣa-nimeṣa*). For example, in his *PTlv* he says:

> O Lady with beautiful hips! The Heart is the subtle vibration of the triangle which consists of the incessant expansion and contraction of the three powers, and it is the place of repose, the place of supreme bliss. This very Heart is the self of Bhairava, of that which is the essence of Bhairava, and of the blessed supreme Goddess who is inseparable and nondifferent from Him. Now consciousness, which is formed of the Ultimate (*A*), vibrates with a seed vibration

> in the two extreme points of the first vowel (*A*), two points whose nature is that of reposing in their own-nature. And because of the power of that vibration, consciousness, which is composed of the essence of all, becomes in the central point, the impulse toward the manifestation of the distinct and different cognitions.[4]

Clearly, the internal motion of expansion and contraction permits the impulse of *spanda* to manifest the variety of cognitions apparent in the manifest world. The unbroken unity of the non-dual can be animated and even polarized by an internal movement that is intrinsic to it. Yet this movement, the *spanda*, is incapable of reducing the non-dual, of rendering it anything less than non-dual. The essence of the absolute non-duality is that it harbors within it a rhythm, a pendulum that is able to swing the full spectrum of its reach without sundering the absolute.

All of these notions are intrinsic to an understanding of the Heart. This internal urge of the Heart generates the motor dualism of the Heart; we see it in such polarities as *prakāśa-vimarśa, saṃkoca-vikāsa, unmeṣa-nimeṣa, vikalpa-nirvikalpa, duḥkha-sukha, bhukti-mukti*, and *jñāna-ajñāna*. In addition, this motor dualism constitutes the essential element of the *visarga*, the Emissional Power, which we will consider in the next section. The Ultimate is *spanda:* it vibrates, it expands and contracts; it manifests and reabsorbs; it is full of waves and waveless; it is full of bliss and yet suffering occurs; it plays a game of hide-and-seek with itself in which ignorance alternates with knowledge, and in which enjoyment and liberation can coincide.

In a passage which explains the Heart-*mantra* Abhinavagupta says:

> This is the great Heart, the triangle, the Ultimate, filled by its three parts each of which is higher than the last, that is the phonemes *S, A U*, and *Ḥ*. The great Heart has as its basis the never obstructed capacity for carrying out hundreds of openings and closings of the All, as shown by the power of contraction and expansion whose essence are the functions of appearing, that is blazing forth, and disappearing, that is dissolving down. This Heart thus has three parts or portions.[5]

The reference to the three parts of the Heart specifically refers in this case to the three phonemes of the Heart-*mantra*, which will be analyzed in a later chapter. In a more general sense we can also see here the notion of triads growing out of these pairs: the Śiva-*śakti* dyad always takes place on the background of the illimitable infinity of the One. We have considered this in reference to the notion of *madhya:* the omnipresent center acts as a stage or backdrop against which the two can interact. The *anuttara*

forms that One which must be understood as underlying the two, and in this way the triplicity of the Heart arises.

The notions of contraction and expansion of the Heart are directly related to the spiritual conditions of ignorance or enlightenment of the individual soul. Abhinavagupta describes this relationship as follows:

> When the Heart is in a state of contraction the awakened awareness of the individual self is in fact a state of ignorance. But when this contraction ceases to function, then the true nature of the Self shines forth.[6]

According to the *PTlv*, the process of bringing the contraction of the Heart to an end is effected by the divinities of Bhairava, who manipulate two opposing vibrations:

> The initiated one knows this supreme knowledge characterized by the Heart and which is given by the divinities of Bhairava who are within the Heart and who bring an escape from the vibration of manifestation which leads to an obscuring of the Self, and are rather directed towards the supreme vibration which consists of the opening of the Self. These same divinities destroy the chief bond which is the state of contraction.[7]

Abhinavagupta differentiates here between a "vibration of manifestation" (*prapañca-spanda*) and the "supreme vibration" (*parispanda*). The first obscures or, more literally, closes (*nimīlana*) the Self, while the second opens, or discloses it (*unmīlana*). The terms *unmīlana-nimīlana* generally refer to an opening and closing of the eyes, an image that is particularly appropriate to the concrete experiential nature of the knowledge aspired to here.

There is a dialectic operating between the notions of expansion and contraction, of opening and closing. Abhinavagupta says:

> In the two conditions, the inner and the outer, there exists a vibration of consciousness whose nature is the three powers, a vibration which is both universal and particular, which is always in the process of expanding and contracting because it so wishes to appear even though in reality it is beyond all expansion and contraction. He whose final aim is internal and whose vision is directed outwards attains the highest realization.[8]

While the supreme reality can initially be discovered by the introvertive gaze, its definition as "omnipresent" assures that it will also eventually be perceived as resident even in the external objects. The initial process for realization involves the practitioner closing the eyes to the finite realities that constitute the external world. In this way the practitioner is open

to the inner world of the Self. This technique for realization mirrors and reverses the process by which Śiva first manifests the external world by closing his eye of knowledge.[9]

As the practitioner advances, however, he is invited to a higher spiritual posture. Here he must remain open to the inner world of the vibratory Self, and yet at the same time open himself again to the external, finite realities. As his practice of this new and apparently contradictory posture advances, he attains a balanced steadiness and is not shaken from his internal absorption even when fully open again to the external world. The final attainment in this posture, known either as the *khecarī-mudrā* or *bhairavī-mudrā*, consists of the identification of the inner vibrating Self as constituting the visible essence of the external finite realities.[10] Kṣemarāja clarifies this process of alternation between inner and outer:

> 'Pratimīlana' means both inward awareness of the Divine (*nimīlana*), and outward awareness of the Divine (*unmīlana*). He now sees the universe over and over again with an awareness in which the residual traces of difference have completely vanished. The *yogī* has an experience in which he is inwardly absorbed in the Supreme Divine consciousness (*nimīlana*); again when he turns towards the universe, he experiences it as the same as his own essential Divine consciousness (*unmīlana*).[11]

The play between opening and closing, between expanding and contracting, is the essential characteristic of the Heart. The Heart itself constitutes the highest method for reaching the condition of non-duality which finally unifies the open and the closed, the expanded and contracted.

> It is the Heart whose nature is a vibration which constitutes the supreme method for achieving the highest non-duality which consists of a universal grace. For the nature of the self-referential character of the consciousness which composes the awakening in the Heart is that it is an astonishment brought about by the total fullness of consciousness.[12]

There are two curious terms that relate to the notion of the expansion and contraction of the Heart and that occur in close proximity to each other in the *TĀ*. The first is the obscure term *matsyodara:* literally, "the belly of the fish." This yogic term in all probability attests to the links we have explored in Chapter 2 between the Kaula lineage and the Matsyendranātha-Gorakṣanātha tradition of Haṭha-Yoga. Abhinavagupta says:

> There on the level of the highest *kuṇḍalinī* there is the Emissional Power which is beautiful because it contains within itself the vibration, there the yogin should repose devoted to the condition of the belly of the fish.[13]

The precise significance of the term *matsyodara* is unclear. Eliade comments that:

> According to Bagchi, the name Matsyendranāth indicates the trade of "fisherman." But still to be explained is the entire symbolism of "fish" and "fisherman," which occurs in innumerable cultural contexts and always in connection with a "revelation," or, more precisely, the passage of a doctrine from a state of oblivion or "eclipse" to the state of complete manifestation.[14]

On a less technical level, the notion of the belly of the fish conveys, like the Heart, an absorption, and perhaps even a swallowing, into an enclosed and mysterious receptacle. Though by contrast with the external world it may appear dark, a sojourn in this enclosure grants the *yogin* an enlightening and revealing knowledge.

In the verse that follows in the *TĀ* we encounter another puzzling animal reference:

> Just as the she-ass and the mare, so the *yogin* having entered the temple of bliss which is his own abode, and which is composed of expansion and contraction, rejoices in his own Heart. In the same way, he should attain the Bhairava pair which increase through expansion and contraction, and which abounds in the multitudes of all beings which are incessantly manifested from that and reabsorbed back into that.[15]

While Jayaratha glosses this passage in terms of a specific sexual allusion, the precise significance of the comparison to a she-ass or mare remains unclear. It cannot be dismissed as an anomalous reference because it recurs in the *PTv*.[16]

Visarga

The notion of *visarga*, translated as Emissional Power, constitutes a central and essential component of the meaning of the Heart.[17] It might perhaps be called the most "tantric" concept in Abhinavagupta's thought, for it combines a great number of the essential conceptions of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva Tantra. This assertion might be initially puzzling to anyone familiar with Sanskrit but unfamiliar with the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. For the Sanskritist the term *visarga* is a familiar grammatical term commonly encountered in Sanskrit phonology as naming the pure, voiceless aspiration. How this apparently simple grammatical concept becomes a crucial and complex component of the Shaiva tantric conceptions represents an interesting historical problem which cannot

be pursued here.[18] Nevertheless, an examination of the term *visarga* can shed important light on the theoretical bases of the Shaiva Tantra.

Let us begin our examination of the notion of *visarga* by quoting Abhinavagupta's initial exposition of the term in the *PTlv:*

> The knowing subject has as its essence the supremely subtle vibration of the Self. It is characterized by knowedge and action, and its nature is one of contraction and expansion, that is, opening and closing. It is not like a pot, and so on, which is inert, limited and stationary. The more this combination of expansion and contraction becomes evident in the vibration of the Heart, of the triangle, etc., the more does the subjectivity become elevated, until it reaches the consciousness of Bhairava. Conversely, the more the expansion and contraction diminish, the more does the subjectivity fall until it becomes inert like a stone etc. This expansion and contraction is the characteristic of the *visarga*, whose essence is freedom, that is, the very power of the Lord, of the Ultimate. Therefore, the phoneme *Ḥ*, the *visarga*, is termed the *Rudra-yāmala*, the Rudra-dyad, because it consists of both the supreme Śiva and *śakti*, of the rest and activity which constitute the union of Bhairava with his Beloved.[19]

In Abhinavagupta's teachings about the Kaula method, the term *visarga* has a wide signification. Here, it comes to name that power (known alternatively as the *kaulikī śakti*, the Devī, the *nāda*) that is responsible for emitting the universe in all its glorious variety. Equally important, it names the power that must be harnessed by the tantric *yogin* to continue the arc of manifestation as it doubles back on the journey of return to Śiva. This power may be thought of as an impelling force (*icchā-śakti*) that at one and the same time continuously pushes everything out into being, and continuously absorbs it all back into Śiva. This power in the Heart, which is the Goddess, and which is named the *visarga*, is at once centrifugal (*pravṛtti*), that is, Emissional and expansive, as well as centripetal (*nivṛtti*), that is, absorptive and unitive.[20]

This expansion and contraction forms a kind of "alternating current" of spiritual power which may be tapped by the *yogin* in various ways. The "expansive" mode may be employed for the further manifestation of desires in the external or subtle worlds (*bhoga, phala*), or, during the farther reaches of the *sādhanā*, for the establishment of the experience of non-duality even in outward perceptions. The "contractive" mode connects the *yogin* to the inwardly ascending force that effortlessly propels the *yogin* to rest in absorption (*samāveśa-viśrānti*) in his own unbounded, original consciousness. Here, the infinitely fast vibration of consciousness allows the re-emergence of the state of Bhairava, the state of liberation in this very life. It is an interesting part of the dialectic of reversal of the

visarga that the "expansive" mode mentioned above may, from another perspective, be termed "contractive," and vice-versa.

Abhinavagupta calls the *visarga* the Rudra-dyad. On one level, the double nature of the *visarga* clearly reflects its graphic representation in the *Nāgarī* script: two dots placed vertically one above the other, sometimes accompanied by a straight vertical line just to the left of the two dots. The single dot, *bindu*, which is the phoneme that precedes the *visarga* in the enumeration of the vowels, is said to represent the finite, knowing subject. The *visarga*, which is made up of two *bindu*-s, points to the inherently self-referential capacity of consciousness. It is in this sense that the *visarga* represents the freedom of consciousness, the *vimarśa*, which is the most important characteristic of consciousness. Consciousness is not like a rock crystal that passively reflects all that appears before it. Rather, the freedom and spontaneity present in consciousness allow for a continuous process of self-consciousness (*svasaṃvedana*) as well. The *visarga* represents the basic component of the *sādhanā* in which the finite consciousness is doubled back on itself. At first, as this process occurs, consciousness simply encounters more and more of its own contents. Finally, a powerful moment of recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) occurs when the beam of consciousness becomes conscious of itself and nothing else. This is termed the entrance into the "fourth," *turīya*, and here the condition of simple *nirvikalpa* ensues.

The *visarga*, which is tentatively translated as the "Emissional Power," brings together all the various levels of the tantric cosmos: the divine level of outward cosmic manifestation, the human level of inward spiritual absorption, and the ritual level on which the human becomes divine. In terms of language, the *visarga* functions both as a phoneme, the outwardly explosive aspiration of breath, and as a component of numerous *mantra*-s, where its function is rather to cause the inward cessation of the vital breath. On the level of ritual, it resonates with the *kula-yāga*, the secret ritual taught in veiled terms by Abhinavagupta, where it may signify the orgasmic expulsion of the life force; or, on the level of inner, tantric yoga which is part of the same ritual, it coincides with the blissful inward force, the *kuṇḍalinī*. In each of these environments, the polar, dyadic nature of the *visarga* is clearly at work.

We have seen that the *visarga* has an essential role to play in the tantric formulations of the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas. Its meanings can be summarized by the following: (1) It is a phoneme, the last of the vowels, which is said to be generically present in all the other fifteen vowels. (2) As such, it forms the most important part, the immortal part, of the sixteen parts of the moon, the so-called lunar stations with which the vowels are equated. (3) The *visarga* is said to be located in the Heart. This location is of extreme

importance for the process of experiential replication in the Kaula tradition, the tradition of the Embodied Cosmos. In brief, the location of the *visarga* in the Heart symbolizes the constant availability, at the core of the yogic body, of that force which allows the process of enlightenment to unfold spontaneously. (4) The *visarga* in the Heart is the very power of consciousness itself and, according to the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas, the highest power of consciousness is its freedom. (5) The *visarga* expresses the freedom of the highest reality, which literally indulges in a sport of hide-and-seek, with itself. In its rhythmical expansion and contraction, the *visarga* functions on the cosmic level to manifest the multiple realities that emerge from Śiva. In fact, these manifestations never really emerge from the Ultimate; instead, they take place within it. The Ultimate is, in a very real sense, hidden within the manifest: the infinite is present within the finite. The process of the tantric *sādhanā*, then, involves the search for the supreme reality, which, during the *nirvikalpa* state, is located first in the Heart, in the deepest recesses of consciousness. The force that allows this condition to arise is the *visarga*, the very same power that initially brought about the process of outward manifestation. (6) The *visarga* functions on all levels, from the cosmic to the human. There are moments within moments of its functioning, cycles within cycles. The entire conception of cyclic time can be seen as an expression of the functioning of the *visarga*. (7) The *visarga* functions as part of the ritualistic symbolism of sexuality, of the emission of seed, of the union of a couple or pair. There is no denying that this is one meaning of the term. However, it is important to emphasize that if we reduce the notion of *visarga* simply to sexual orgasm or ejaculation we commit an egregious error.[21] Certainly, there are passages in the *TĀ* in which, in one of its meanings, the term *visarga* may properly be translated as ejaculation.[22] However, even in these passages, to insist that this is the *only* meaning of the term damages the subtlety of the entire tantric teaching. *Visarga* is the creative potency of the Ultimate. Undeniably, this creative potency expresses itself in one of its many manifestations as the force and power of human sexuality. The *visarga* that the practitioner wishes to attain, however, represents an experience of the total and unencumbered potency of the Ultimate itself. In the final analysis, the notion of *visarga* is not, at least originally, a philosophical concept. In order to understand it we must recognize its concreteness. It does not function as an abstraction in a system of thought. It is rather a powerfully descriptive summation of the culminating experience of the tantric *sādhanā*. Let us now turn to analyze this notion in more detail as it occurs in three central passages in Abhinavagupta's writings: the *PTlv*, the *MVv*, and the *TĀ*.

In the *PTlv* Abhinavagupta devotes the longest commentary that

he writes on any of the *śloka*-s to an analysis and exposition of the triple *visarga.*[23] He employs the traditional non-dual Kashmir Shaiva division of *para*—highest, *apara*—lowest, and *parāpara*—intermediate, to categorize the *visarga.* The *parā visarga-śakti* comprises the manifestation of the first fifteen vowels.[24] The fifteenth vowel is the *bindu,* which corresponds to the finite knowing subject. As we have seen, the vowel *visarga* is not counted in this list because it is generically implicit in each of the other fifteen vowels. These fifteen vowels are also known as the "lunar stations" because they structure and fulfill the "moon of awakened consciousness." The *parā visarga-śakti* corresponds to the manifestation within Śiva of the potentiality for both the finite, limited awareness as well as the structure that makes possible the completely fulfilled enlightened consciousness. Thus, in so far as Śiva is counted as one of the thirty-six *tattva*-s, he is composed of these sixteen vowels from *A* to *Ḥ*.[25]

The appearance of knowable objects (*vedyollāsa*), which constitute the lowest or *aparā visarga-śakti,* occurs next. While the *parā visarga-śakti* is linked to the supreme, the *anuttara, A,* the lowest *visarga* is said to occur in will, *icchā, I,* and domination, *īśanā, Ī.* As Abhinavagupta describes the process:

> Now there occurs the appearance of knowable objects, which takes place in will (*I*) and domination (*Ī*). As knowable objects begin to appear, begin to separate themselves, there occur, on the gross level, the five gross elements and, on the subtle level, the five subtle elements. This results in ten principles, namely: earth, water, fire, air, space, smell, taste, form, touch, and sound. This is the manifestation of the knowable objects. At the same time, the sense capacities are being manifested as instruments of cognition. That is to say, the five action-capacities, namely, sexual, excretory, ambulatory, grasping, and speaking, in which the power of action predominates; and the five sense-capacities, smelling, tasting, seeing, touching, and hearing, in which the power of cognition predominates.[26]

The five gross elements (*mahābhūta*-s), the five subtle elements (*tanmātra*-s), the five sense-capacities (*buddhīndriya*-s), and the five action capacities (*karmendriya*-s) all appear as part of this lowest *visarga.* This does not conclude the task of this lowest *visarga,* however. The finite self that will move within the world of these objects is yet to be structured. Abhinavagupta continues:

> Then, when by gradual degrees, the aspect of the knowable objects begins to diminish, the perceiving aspect begins to manifest itself, namely: mind, egoity, intellect, primordial materiality, and individual consciousness. Thus the principles beginning with "earth" and ending with "individual consciousness"

> correspond to the series of phonemes that run from *K* to *M*. The individual consciousness, even though it is a limited perceiver, is here reckoned as belonging to the group of knowable objects. For without it, who would perceive the objects of knowledge beginning with "earth", etc.? Such is the nature of that which appears as the knowable objects.[27]

It is interesting to observe that up to this point the lowest *visarga-śakti* corresponds exactly to the traditional list of twenty-five *tattva*-s of the Sāṃkhya. By including the *puruṣa* among the "knowables", however, Abhinavagupta has undermined the primary distinction in the Sāṃkhya between the pure, contentless consciousness (*puruṣa*) and the prakṛtic structure of materiality.[28] Abhinavagupta does not argue the point at length in this commentary; however, he does present his case against the Sāṃkhya in the *TS*.[29] From what he says there we know that in the above passage he is deliberately subverting this crucial Sāṃkhyan distinction.

There is more to this lowest *visarga-śakti*. In order to understand the role of the sheaths (*kañcuka*-s) we must understand the problem that they attempt to solve. We know that the fundamental division in the Sāṃkhya system occurs between the *puruṣa* and the subtlest of the prakṛtic evolutes, the *buddhi*. The Sāṃkhya is a rigidly dualistic system and it postulates an irreconcilable difference between the nature of consciousness and the material evolutes. This distinction, however, which is so primary to the whole structure of the Sāṃkhya, also creates what is perhaps its thorniest problem. Briefly, as a consequence of this distinction it is difficult to explain how the finite self (the *liṅga-śarīra*) can be said to be conscious in any sense of the term.

The non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition must face a kind of mirror image of this problem. The tradition postulates a radical non-dualism in which Śiva, the infinite consciousness, is the totality of all that exists. On these terms it is difficult to account for the continued maintenance of the individual soul as a contracted structure. If the finite self is, in its essential nature, infinite consciousness and omnipotence, how do we account for its existence as limited and bound? The tradition does not postulate a dualism in its list of *tattva*-s, as does the Sāṃkhya, which would allow it to set up a natural distinction and difference between Śiva and the finite self.

The problem of distinguishing the Ultimate from the finite self in non-dual systems is by no means new, or restricted only to the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. It is taken up and receives a number of solutions in different traditions. As part of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva manner of dealing with this problem it superimposes on the Sāṃkhya list of twenty-five principles a scaffolding of the so-called sheaths or *kañcuka*-s. There

is some variation as to the number and names of the sheaths.[30] In the *PTlv* there are four of these and their function is to maintain the finite self suspended in the middle of things, not allowing it to sink to a state of total inertia, while at the same time not permitting it to rise up to the condition of Bhairava. In effect, the sheaths function as a kind of technical expansion of the bald statement that the finite self is maintained in its condition because of the will of Śiva.[31] As Abhinavagupta describes the process:

> The mass of knowable objects, without abandoning their state of being knowable objects, operate to unify the two different aspects: knowable object and limited knower. The principles engaged in this unification are: *kalā*, formed of air, which impels and consists of a limited capacity for action; impure knowledge, formed of fire, which illuminates and consists of a limited capacity for knowing; *māyā:* formed of water, which satiates; the power of attachment, expressed in the verse by the word *Indra*, formed of earth, which consists of intense affection, and is by nature a stopping, an immersion.
>
> These are the four powers that maintain the individual soul resting in the middle like Triśañku, which otherwise would fall into the condition of complete inertia like a rock, etc., or would ascend into the sky of consciousness like the supreme Lord. In either case, in the absence of the finite knowing subject, there would be no knowable objects, nor would there be contraction and expansion, because without contraction, expansion is not logically possible. This is absurd, because the entire universe, that is, the manifestation of the knowable object or the manifestation of the corresponding knower, is projected by the Emissional force which is precisely expansion and contraction.[32]

Abhinavagupta is describing four sheaths.[33] *Kalā*, whose form is related to air, appears to be a force that sets things in motion. The idea seems to be that Śiva reduces himself to a condition of deep sleep (*suptasthānin*) in which he is incapable of anything.[34] The sheath of *kalā* then restores to him a limited capacity for action. The impure knowledge (*aśuddhavidyā*), said to be formed of fire, restores a limited capacity for knowledge. The sheath of attachment (*rāga*), linked to earth, restores a finite capacity for willing. However, the force of will in the individual does not seem to be linked to freedom as it is in Śiva, but has been deformed into an intense attachment in which the finite self is totally immersed and suspended. The *māyā*, linked to water, functions as the material cause of all that will manifest itself. It is said to cause fullness (*āpyāyikā*) because it brings to fruition that which is waiting to be manifested.

Abhinavagupta continues by explaining why the power of space (*ākāśa-śakti*), the fifth element, is not counted in this list:

> The power of space plays no role in sustaining the finite subject. For the

power of space is inherent in the individual soul as the true subjectivity, at once empty of objects and providing a place in which objects may be known. This is the Emissional Power in its lowest form.[35]

In the *TS* the list of sheaths is extended to six, including the four listed above as well as the sheath of time (*kāla*) and that of necessity (*niyati*).[36] It is difficult to know why there is no mention made in the *PTlv* of these two. In any case, whether the sheaths are counted as four or six, we see that the *aparā visarga-śakti* consists of the traditional list of twenty-five *tattva*-s of the Sāṃkhya to which have been added the list of the sheaths. This is also known as the impure-path (*aśuddhādhvan*).

Now Abhinavagupta describes the intermediate manifestation, the *parāparā visarga-śakti*, which corresponds to the so-called pure-path (*śuddhādhvan*):

When the aspect of objectivity begins by degrees to be concealed, and the form of consciousness begins to unfold, then to that degree there occurs a firmness, an increasing fullness of the form of consciousness; a union with its own light, a vibration which is characterized by the attainment of supreme freedom. Everything is then thoroughly pervaded by the form of consciousness. The expression "the pentad of *brahman*" refers to the five phonemes *S* to *KṢ*, which pervade, fulfill, cause to expand the Self—and they relate the five principles to Vidyā, Īśvara, Sadāśiva, Śakti and Śiva; they are formed of the subtle earth, water, fire, air and space, and correspond to the five faces of Śiva: Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa, and Īśāna. This is the Emissional Power in its intermediate form.[37]

The pentads that make up the intermediate *visarga* correspond to the pentad of *śakti*-s: the principle of Śiva corresponds to a prevalence of the power of consciousness (*cit-śakti*); the principle of Śakti corresponds to the prevalence of the power of bliss (*ānanda-śakti*); the principle of the eternal Śiva (Sadāśiva) corresponds to the prevalence of the power of will (*icchā-śakti*). Abhinavagupta states that the power of will consists of a state of internal assent in which there is a balance, a condition of equilibrium between knowledge and action. The principle of the Lord (Īśvara) corresponds to a prevalence of the power of knowledge (*jñāna-śakti*). Finally, the principle of the pure knowledge (*śuddhavidyā*) corresponds to the prevalence of the power of action (*kriyā-śakti*).[38] Abhinavagupta insists, however, on the relationship of all of these pentads to the Supreme.

Finally, these pentads are resolved back into the Ultimate, *A*. In this way, the Emissional Power expands with a form that extends from the lunar stations

> beginning with *A*, to the pentad of *brahman*. This is the wheel of powers of the Lord, of Bhairava, a wheel which is an uninterrupted continuous series. For the five powers of consciousness, bliss, will, knowledge and action, which are made of the five "elemental" powers, are, in effect, the powers of consciousness placed in the triangle, namely the Ultimate, the will and the unfolding (*AIU*), which then unfold into a fivefold division.[39]

We see that manifestation, from its origins in the Supreme to its reabsorption into the Supreme as the pentad of *brahman*, is a display of the power of Śiva and indeed is termed the *śakti-cakra*, the wheel of powers of the Lord. This is the entire display of the unfolding of the triple *visarga-śakti*, which manifests the thirty-six principles. These principles together constitute the manifestation.

In the *PTv* and elsewhere Abhinavagupta sets up a complicated correspondence between the thirty-six *tattva*-s and the fifty phonemes.[40] This is accomplished by setting the sixteen vowels as equal to Śiva. The intermediate *visarga* then, without *śakti*, accounts for three phonemes, the six sheaths take up six more, and we are left with five pentads of consonant mutes, each related to one of the pentads of the twenty five *tattva*-s that remain.

The process is further complicated because this entire manifestation may be understood as itself occurring on four levels corresponding to the four levels of speech. First, the process of manifestation is harbored within Śiva in a completely undifferentiated form, as nondifferent from him. This corresponds to the *parā vāk*. There then occur, as these principles begin to manifest, two intermediate levels corresponding to the levels of *paśyantī* and *madhyamā*. Finally, the full-fledged manifestation of the ordinary tangible world of name and form takes place. On each of the first three levels (that is, excluding *vaikharī*) the phoneme that corresponds to each particular *tattva* is different.

Setting aside the details of the process, we can see that there is a kind of dialectic at play here that reflects the dual nature of the *visarga*. Examined from the point of view of Śiva (or of a liberated being), the entire manifestation in its most concrete form has never really departed from Śiva; it has never sundered the absolute reality. The entire play of manifestation occurs safely ensconced in the bosom of the Supreme. It is a coagulation of forms that in their essence are nothing more (or less!) than absolute consciousness:

> Therefore, all this is at first formed of an undivided self-referential consciousness. Because of an act of self-divided consciousness, whose nature is an awareness of distinctions, it assumes the form of fifty cognitions which attain

> the state of being objects, and thus the group of external objects arises. The life of these principles results precisely because they are essentially moments of conscious cognition. This is the form of the *mātṛkā*.[41]

Here we encounter the name given to the assemblage of fifty phonemes: *mātṛkā*. This name, as Abhinavagupta's comment implies, reflects the ultimate status of the fifty phonemes as acts of consciousness (*parāmarśa*) held within the absolute consciousness of Śiva. The term resonates with the notion of the Mother, the divine source or origin, the creative matrix. It also calls to mind the notion of the finite knower, the *māyāpramātṛ*, who arises out of this divine matrix to engage in the triple relationship of knower-known-knowing, *mātṛ-meya-māna*.

Abhinavagupta continues to insist that manifestation really occurs within the Supreme:

> Everything whatsoever which is said in the secret books sacred to Śiva-Rudra etc. arises from this reality. That form indeed, which bestows the lowest and the highest powers, all that is obtained in the thirty-six principles. Self-referential consciousness constitutes the life of those thirty-six principles. The cognizable objects which are the inert aspects form, so to speak, its body. That consciousness is found in the blessed Goddess, and therefore she is able to bestow everything. This is the threefold manifestation, which has the phoneme *A* as its root, and ends in the phoneme *KṢA*. That manifestation is in the abode of the Ultimate *A*, has its beginning in the Ultimate *A*, and finally therein comes to repose in the very Śiva. Therefore, by that knowledge, the true nature of the Ultimate, of the Vibration, comes to be well known. Which is to say, that the Ultimate is only that, i.e. the entire *sṛṣṭi* is really only the Ultimate *A*. Thus, the Power which abides in the Heart is, above all, formed of an undivided self-referential consciousness. Then, that Power, by its own innate freedom formed of the Ultimate *A*, turns itself into distinct cognitions whose form is the *kaulikasiddhi*. This has been decisively ascertained in all the *tantra*-s such as the *Śiva, Rudra, Rahasya*, etc.[42]

The entire manifestation is nothing other than the Ultimate. Abhinavagupta puts this in a slightly different way in the *TĀ*:

> The powerful movements of manifestation and reabsorption are nothing more than the Emission of the Lord. The level of the Emissional is a projection of the Self, from the Self, in the Self.[43]

The play in the Sanskrit on the various forms of the term *self*, (*svātman*), *svātmanaḥ, svātmani, svātmakṣepa*, emphasizes the one and only possible location in which the manifestation may take place.

Let us leave this rather long passage from the *PTlv* and turn to an excellent summary of the notion of *visarga*, which Abhinavagupta gives in his *MVv*.[44] The section which precedes this passage summarizes many of the same ideas about the fifteen vowels that we have considered above. We begin with the portion that deals with the *visarga*. Abhinavagupta considers the notion of "projection" (*kṣepa, vikṣepa*) as an essential component of the *visarga*.

> At that point, within this mass of vowels, whose nature is that it is full because it unites everything, the Emissional Power so called, comes to be and that is a power which is known also as dispersion or projection. (*vikṣepa*).[45]

In the next verse Abhinavagupta plays with the notion of the *visarga* as the sixteenth vowel by suggesting that there are two further parts to it, a seventeenth part in which there is a separation, and an eighteenth part related to the concept of perturbation:

> A seventeenth part is known as the "separation" (*viśleṣa*) of the *visarga*. In some texts there is mention of yet another, an eighteenth part due to another perturbation.[46]

Abhinavagupta relates the *visarga* to the *kaulikī-śakti* as we have already seen in the previous chapter:

> This is the highest power, the supreme *kaulikī* immanent familial power of that which is beyond the *kula*, that is, the group, of the phoneme *A*, which is the *anuttara*, the Supreme, formed of the Supreme Bhairava.[47]

He then distinguishes three moments within the *visarga*. The first is simply the capacity for the internal movement which he terms agitation (*prakṣobha*), the second the beginning of that agitation, and finally there is the actual process of manifestation as it begins with the emergence of the first phoneme:

> That indeed is the Emissional Power, and from it this whole universe arises. In it, we may distinguish three different moments, a capacity for agitation (*prakṣobha*), the beginning of the movement of agitation. Then, when there occurs a state of fullness of that agitation, the group of the phoneme *A* begins progressively to diminish as the other (lesser) vowels manifest. Thus the characteristic of that sextet of vowels is that it is produced from the oscillatory movement of the Emissional Power.[48]

In the next verses Abhinavagupta relates this internal power of agitation

to the Supreme and the Lord and brings out the symbolism of the dyad of Śiva and *śakti*, which is characteristic of the *visarga:*

> Because its essential nature is the Supreme *A*, it is an expression of the first vowel, *A*. The blessed Lord is in fact eternally vibrating within himself.
> In him is the central power which is full of the abundance of all beings. He is beautiful with a cosmic bliss that arises naturally from his own fully willed agitation.
> He throbs eternally beautiful with the elixir (*rasa*) of this completely full Emission. That union of Śiva and *śakti* is called love.[49]

In this passage we see a perfect example of the several levels of symbolism being referred to at the same time: the cosmic, manifestational level of the God joined with his vibrating power, and the human level of sexual union. In the next verses the secret ritual of the Tantra is alluded to:

> Those who desire to gain entry into this Emissional state in all its fullness follow the traditional lineage which teaches: "By means of churning and tasting." (*V.Bh.*70) So we see that the Supreme Light which animates the entire body and which presides over the central "vein" (*nāḍī*) agitated by the wine, garlands and the season attains a condition of Emission, and arrives at a state of ecstasy, of bliss, which may not be completely full; but if it is full, it is made of the Lord himself. Therefore this Emissional Power appears as a single unique power.[50]

An excellent summary statement that joins these ideas together occurs in the *TĀ:*

> That reality which is higher than the highest and the lowest, is called the Goddess, that reality is the essence, the Heart, the supreme Emissional Power of the Lord.[51]

In another passage on the *visarga* Abhinavagupta presents the notion of encapsulation (*saṃpuṭīkṛti*), which describes the mutual inherence of the absolute reality in all of the finite states, as well as the presence of those finite states in the absolute reality. As Abhinavagupta describes it:

> Thus Śiva who is pierced through by sound, is in his own essential nature self-reflexive consciousness. Śiva, who appears as the Mother and Father at the same time, is thus the universal agent. The Emission composed of the power assumes the form of the point of Śiva and again, because of the endless universe potentially contained within it, it assumes the condition of the Supreme. The self-reflexive consciousness which is applied to the very Self of the Lord, which in its internal essence contains the unlimited universal existence, is not, according to what is said by the teachers, characterized by

> the state of duality. This self-reflexive consciousness as applied in the nature of the Lord is characterized by the non-duality of Śiva and *śakti*, that is to say, of the Supreme and the Emission, and, because it is full to overflowing, it is called the 'I'.
>
> This flowing forth formed essentially of the power, begins with the Supreme *A* and ends with the phoneme *H*, and as such comprehends within it the entire universe without remainder. This in the end is reabsorbed back into the Supreme. Thus this entire universe resides within the power, and that power resides within the highest Supreme, and that again resides in the power. This is the true meaning of the encapsulation taught by the Lord in the *Śrī-Trika-śāstra*, where indeed an encapsulation of the power is mentioned. The entire universe shines in consciousness and thus in the same universe consciousness shines forth. These three terms uniting and becoming compressed form the one, supreme form of Bhairava, whose nature is the 'I'.[52]

We have considered at several different points the ideas summarized in the concept of encapsulation.[53] The image seems to be one of two lotus-like halves of the Heart coming together like hemispherical bowls to enclose and contain the space within them. The two halves are formed of the Supreme and the power, and within them, as a result of their seamless connection, arises the entire play of manifestation. These three, the Supreme, the power (*visarga*), and the manifested world are all fused and intermingled into the single reality of the 'I', that is, the universal consciousness. This condition of encapsulation describes a condition of meditative realization in which the *yogin* actually experiences the encapsulated nature of reality. Once again, it is the *visarga* itself that will bring about this realization. Abhinavagupta describes this process in the next verses:

> This Emissional Power of the Lord is present and functions in all things in the following way. That alone is the source of the entire agitation of the tasting of bliss. When the state of indifference has disappeared, a vibration is perceived in the Heart when one hears a sweet song, or smells the perfume of sandalwood and so on. This vibration is none other than the power of bliss. It is because of this power that men become aesthetically or religiously sensitive, that is, possessed of Heart.
>
> (The three types of Emission). The first, the "atomic" (*āṇava*), known by the technical name of repose in consciousness (*citta-viśrānti*), occurs when all possible products are emitted into the fire of emptiness. The next, known as the awakening of the consciousness, is related to the power in that its nature is that it maintains all visible things, and here all things that are heard, seen, etc., tend to become submerged in consciousness of the self. Because of the unification of all things that are thus tending to be submerged in consciousness, and because of the increase and growth of these things in the Heart, because

> of an entrance into Śiva with a condition of being totally full due to the dissolution of the finite consciousness, as a result of the dissolution of the limiting possibility resulting from any future tension, as in the previous cases, there occurs the highest Emission. This is the *Śāmbhava*, known technically as the dissolution of the mind.
>
> These three Emissions are described in similar terms in the *Tattva-rakṣā-vidhāna:* the union of the two is regarded as occurring in the center of the receptacle of the lotus of the Heart. This union is characterized by the repose of the consciousness, and it is called the last Emission. The second Emission is characterized by the awakening of the mind. In it the entire universe, both moving and nonmoving, appears unified. This second Emission is of two types such that when it is even partially limited by the distinction between perceiver and perceived, then it is known as partial, and when it is united with Śiva it is known as complete.
>
> The third Emission, characterized by the dissolution of the mind and its nature, is a completely full perception due to the interruption of the perceiver-perceived duality, whose nature is thus a unification, subtle, composed of knowledge and reposed in the self.[54]

Once again we encounter a triple *visarga.* However, whereas the passages we have considered so far discussed the movement of 'emergence' from Śiva, the notion that is discussed here represents the voyage of return to Śiva. These two processes, the journey outward and the journey back in, are both conducted by the *visarga*, and represent on the grandest possible scale the ever-functioning nature of the *visarga* as expansion and contraction. If the process of manifestation, which involves the full-fledged appearance of the visible world, never truly involves a departure from the unmanifest, undifferentiated reality of Śiva, then it follows that the tantric path of return consists of the recovery of this vision of the undifferentiated unity of all things. This vision, which at first appears to annihilate all things into the dark abyss of Śiva, later grows into the *unmīlana samādhi*, which reveals the pulsating essence of Śiva actively structuring and maintaining all the apparently finite and even inert forms of visible reality. The *yogin* must come to a vision of the inseparability of all things from Śiva.

This same *visarga* must be harnessed by the tantric practitioner to traverse this path of return. One must begin by becoming a *sahṛdaya*, someone possessed of Heart. By this, Abhinavagupta means someone who has become sensitive to the vibration of the Heart experienced as a meditative blissfulness. There are three levels of meditative absorption. The first level is the atomic (*āṇava*) in which the meditator reposes in consciousness, *citta-viśrānti.* The term *viśrānti*, repose, is significant. It denotes an effortless resting of consciousness in itself, alert, yet undirected,

so that the current of consciousness may cause it to drift slowly inwards. This culminates in an inner vacuity which Abhinavagupta calls "the fire of emptiness" (*śūnyatānala*). The second level of absorption, known as the absorption related to the power (*śākta*), is that in which all objects of perception tend to become immersed in the consciousness of the self. This is termed the awakening of consciousness, *citta-sambodha.* The third level of meditative absorption, which results in the highest Emission, is called the *Śāmbhava.* Here the finite consciousness is dissolved and the fullness of Śiva manifests itself completely. This stage is known as the *citta-pralaya*, the dissolution of the finite consciousness. While Abhinavagupta does not indicate so in the text, it seems possible that these three levels of meditative realization may have been related to the opening *sūtra* of the *Yoga-sūtra*, in which *yoga* is defined as *citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ:* "yoga is the dissolution of the activities of the finite consciousness." Certainly, any trained *paṇḍita* would have recognized the resemblance between this definition and the phrases *citta-viśrānti* and *citta-sambodha.*

In any case, the process of gaining the undifferentiated vision of unity of all things is carried out by this triple *visarga.* We may understand this as a consequence of the very nature of the Ultimate itself. Śiva is freedom. He is that which cannot be bounded. He is *ananta*, endless. Śiva cannot be imprisoned in the castle of transcendence. Within Śiva there always occurs an overflowing, a surging vibration that leads the infinity of Śiva continuously to surpass itself. Any boundary that might be set for Śiva, any limit that one might attempt to impose in order to contain Śiva will, by the very definition of Śiva as freedom, be overthrown. The boundary will be destroyed and the unbounded freedom of Śiva will assert itself. In fact, this process of self-transcendence is self-referential: when we define Śiva as unbounded freedom, he immediately goes beyond this definition and plays the game of hide-and-seek, by manifesting the boundaries of the finite self and the limited experience of the visible world. He thus transcends unbounded freedom by becoming bound and not free. Abhinavagupta describes this process of self-concealment as brought about by the force of *māyā:*

> As has been said, the consciousness of the Self, as a result of its own intrinsic nature, is full of all things, and there is nothing whatsoever to be added or subtracted from it. However, as a consequence of its capacity for action which is difficult to understand, and because of its unblemished freedom, the highest Lord skillfully plays at the sport of hiding himself. In this respect *māyā* is nothing more than this self-concealment brought about by the Lord, even though his nature is unconcealed and manifestly clear. It is as a result of *māyā* that all our activities are imbued with differentiation.[55]

Śiva's nature as self-transcending freedom, however, is continuously operative. As soon as the process of manifestation of boundaries occurs, Śiva initiates the process by which it may overflow these boundaries which he has imposed on himself. He structures the path of return traversed by himself, in the guise of the ignorant, finite self. As Abhinavagupta relates the process of self-concealment and self-discovery,

> The God, whose nature is a free consciousness, whose characteristic is the supreme light, due to his own intrinsic nature and as a result of his enjoyment of the sport of concealing his own nature, becomes the atomic, finite self, of which there are many. He himself, as a result of his own freedom, binds himself here by means of actions whose nature are composed of imagined differentiations. Such is the power of the God's freedom that, even though he has become the finite self, he once more truly attains his own true form in all its purity.[56]

The power that fuels and continuously urges this self-transcendence onward is once again the very nature of Śiva, the *visarga-śakti.* This process may appear to necessitate effort and discipline on the part of the practitioner, but it becomes effortless once the practitioner has attuned himself to the *visarga.* We can understand this by seeing that the infinite has managed the impossible task of compressing itself into the finite. It then follows that the realization of the infinite involves a process of decompression, of relaxation of the boundaries and bonds which tie up the infinite. This may be accomplished by releasing the tight structures of finiteness, and by attuning to the inwardly expansive movement of the *visarga*, which as *anugraha*, grace, or *kuṇḍalinī*, is *always* operative on the finite self. Then a process of overflowing, of spilling over the walls of the boundaries occurs.

According to the teachings of the tradition, this process is one that all finite souls must inevitably come to, for the *visarga-śakti* is always present in the Heart. As a force which is always available in the center of the yogic body, it is an ever-functioning and undeniable urge in the direction of expansion, of infinity, of freedom, of bliss. Absolute consciousness is never inert, it is never inactive; it is continuously throbbing, expanding, and contracting with the movement of the Heart. As we have seen, it is this movement which continuously, at every instant, projects manifestation into being. It is this same movement, however, that at every moment resolves this manifestation back into Śiva. The expansive-contractive impulse occurs so rapidly that the manifestation is simultaneously established as gross and fully formed, and at the same time, it is always fully abiding in the undifferentiated unity. This dual nature is what is expressed by the notion of encapsulation.

From the point of view of the bound soul, this movement of the *visarga* may be utilized as an infallible method (*upāya*). In its reabsorptive mode, the *visarga* functions automatically as a method for realization of the absolute. When at any instant of awareness one's attention is released into the flow of the *visarga* and ridden much like a wave, then the finite point of individual awareness can perceive its own individual wave merging back into the enormous ocean of consciousness. The individual awareness experiences the inner transformation of his finiteness into the infinite consciousness of the Heart. This experience is the basis of the *Śāmbhavopāya*, the effortless and graceful merging back into Śiva which utilizes the invincible and almost blind urge of the finite to melt back into the whole. In this sense the *visarga* forms the basis for the Kaula method of realization. Abhinavagupta praises the *visarga* as the supreme secret of the Kaula lineage:

> In this way, the dyad, where little by little all differentiated knowledge has dissolved away, is consciousness itself, the unifying Emission, the stable abode, the Supreme, made out of the most noble universal bliss, composed of both Śiva and *śakti*, this is the supreme secret of the Kaula lineage, which is neither appeased nor arising, and yet which is the cause from which emerge all arising and appeasement.[57]

In the same chapter, which contains much penetrating material on the nature of the *visarga*, especially in relation to the secret ritual, Abhinavagupta describes the *visarga* as being triple:

> Thus the *visarga* is threefold: unifying, emergent, and then appeased. This is because from it the varied manifestation emerges (*vicitra sarga*), and to it the manifestation returns (*vigata sarga*). The water-pit (*kuṇḍa*) is the power, Śiva is the *liṅga*, and the union of the two (*melaka*) is the highest abode.[58]

In the commentary, Jayaratha links the emergent (*prodita*) form of the *visarga* with the *śakti*, the appeased (*śānta*) form with Śiva, and the unified (*saṃghaṭṭa*) form with the union. Besides the obvious appeal of a triadic classification for the notion of *visarga*, this threefold categorization succeeds in illustrating the all-encompassing nature of the *visarga*. Abhinavagupta appeals to this same triple division of the *visarga* in the *PTlv:*

> With the descent of the knower and the process of knowing Bhairava and the power, (*Ḥ* and *AU*), there occurs the repose in *brahman* (*S*), that is, a state of undifferentiated identity with the knowable object. The reality which unifies, that is makes of one taste (*ekarasa*) this triangle characterized of three Emissions, one appeased, one aroused and one that is both, and is thus

made of three reposes—that reality is the supreme Emissional principle, and it is the consciousness, the Lord Bhairava himself.[59]

Here we see clearly that the *visarga* is responsible for the recovery of the vision of the undifferentiated unity of all things. The *visarga* makes this universe literally be "of one taste" (*ekarasa*). The *yogin* who has brought this process to its completion is able to recognize the underlying and essentially unconcealed reality of Śiva that composes the most intimate status of every apparently finite object. This same process is described by Abhinavagupta in the *PTlv* as forming the essential feature of the sacrifice (*yāga*) that is carried out by the tantric *vīra* in order to "encapsulate" the entire manifestation:

The sacrifice (*yāga*) is in fact the Emission, which is a resting in that repose whose nature is the "beyond the fourth," the mass of the nondifference of all things. Then he should sacrifice, projecting in that condition of the beyond the fourth, the portion of the Emission, which embraces the entire manifestation, projecting, that is, the form which ends with *AU*, which embraces in itself the tetrad of states beginning with the waking state. Because of this, the Emission, which is situated in the center, is in immediate contact with the states of the vowel (*AU*) and the Being (*S*) which are placed at both of its extremes, and it comes to appropriate the blessed supreme Goddess, whose nature is the Ultimate (*anuttara*), and which abides in nondifferentiation with the Supreme Bhairava, the great Lord, which power transcends all and at the same time is composed of all principles, and is joined with all the masses of existing things which thus form its limbs.[60]

We shall return to the process of attainment of liberation, which includes the rediscovery of the undifferentiated unity of all things, as well as to a discussion of the *mantra*, which both symbolizes and facilitates this rediscovery, in the final chapters. However, we turn in the next chapter to explore some of the images drawn from nature that are used in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition to describe the reality of the Heart.

CHAPTER 7

The Heart and Natural Metaphors

This chapter treats certain "natural" metaphors or images that occur frequently in close proximity to the Heart. These images—the sky, the abyss, the ocean, the moon, and the lotus—all drawn from the world of nature, convey important aspects of the reality of the Heart. They suggest information about the description of the Heart that is important to examine to complete a picture of the symbol.

As has been the case throughout this examination of the Heart symbol, it is the experiential dimension of the reality of the Heart that is brought to the fore by these natural metaphors. We can understand equations such as the Heart as equivalent to the sky, or the Heart equal to the abyss as constituting descriptions of the yogic immersion in the Heart. To suggest that these metaphorical correspondences are mere flights of poetic fancy would be to misjudge seriously the intention of the authors of the texts. Whether we take these images as direct metaphors or as similes, we must see them as the closest possible descriptions that may be given of certain phases of the yogic experience of the Ultimate.

Khecarī

The term *khecarī* appears in the Goddess' initial question in the *PT* verses. The Sanskrit text of the second half of the first verse reads, "*yena vijñātamātreṇa khecarīsamatām vrajet.*" Two different readings of the sense of the line result from two possible interpretations of the second *pāda:*

1) by what means, as soon as known, does the *khecarī*, "moving-in-the-void," attain a condition of equality
2) by means of which, as soon as it is known, he would obtain the condition of equalization with the *khecarī*[1]

The first reading takes *khecarī* to be the subject of *vrajet*. The second interprets the expression *khecarī-samatām* as a *tatpuruṣa* compound. While the second rendering is perhaps the prima facie reading of the verse, Abhinavagupta clearly signals his preference for the first, not-so-obvious interpretation:

> As soon as this means is known, the *khecarī*—this power of consciousness—penetrates into the level of awakened consciousness, and obtains, goes, knows, the state of identity (*samatā*), the state of fullness of the self, the state of non-dual, non-discursive awareness. When that means is not known, such a consciousness is not *khecarī* because it moves only in the portion called "knowable object" whose nature is unawakened. That consciousness is then restricted by knowable objects such as blue, etc., and is thus not the full power of consciousness.

Another interpretation of the *śloka* is now presented:

> Moreover, the spiritual perfections are obtained by the practice of the *yoga* of the vital breath etc., by a series of practices such as concentration etc. How can the Ultimate, which is devoid of temporal succession and is only consciousness, grant the *kaulika* perfection, linked to temporal succession, by the mere knowing of which, one would obtain the nature of the Goddess?[2]

Torella, an Italian Indologist who has studied the *PTlv*, argues that the second part of the above commentary explains the second reading.[3] It is unclear on what basis he draws this conclusion. While there is little doubt as to the reading of *khecarī-samatām* as a *tatpuruṣa*, it is not clear on what basis Torella concludes that this is what Abhinavagupta is trying to indicate in this particular passage of the commentary. In the portion of the commentary referred to, Abhinavagupta appears simply to gloss *khecarī-samatām* with the phrase *devīrūpatvam:* attainment of the condition of the nature of the Goddess. Torella seems to infer from this that Abhinavagupta is signalling the reading of *khecarī-samatām* as a *tatpuruṣa* compound, but this is not at all obvious from the commentary.

An inquiry into the grammatical structure of the term *khecarī* can lend some insight to the meaning of the term and show how it functions in this verse. To begin with, we can see that *khecarī* is an *aluk samāsa*, that is, a compound in which one of the members, *kha*, has retained a

case ending, here a locative ending, giving *khe* as a result. *Kha* means a cavity or hollow. This cavity can be an opening in the ground such as a cave, but may also refer to a cavity or opening in the body. The body openings are usually numbered as nine, but *kha* most often refers specifically to the vagina. In addition, *kha* comes to refer to the vacuity of empty space, of the ether (*ākāśa*), of the sky (*vyoman*). The second member of the compound, *-carī*, seems to be the feminine form of the adjectival *cara*, meaning "moving." So initially, *khecarī* may be read as "moving-in-the-void." The void referred to can be that of the emptiness of space or of the sky. The sky then comes to be identified with the consciousness of Bhairava, the *bhairavīya-cid-ambara:*

> Thus the entire universe is a reflection in the pure sky of the consciousness of Bhairava, in the Lord, and it is not at all due to the favor of anyone else.[4]

Thus the query of the Goddess in the first verse of the *PT* becomes easier to interpret. The attainment of the condition of *khecarī* represents an entrance by the very power of consciousness into the level of enlightenment. The power of consciousness then obtains identity, oneness, evenness, fullness of the self, and a non-dual, nondiscursive consciousness.

To move in the sky of Bhairava is to have gone beyond the limiting presence of finite objects as such and to have penetrated into a level of awareness which is empty of objects. Here the triad of knower, known, and the process of knowing has been transcended. The knower turns away from objects and doubles back on itself. In so doing it creates a situation in which the object of knowing is the knower itself, and the process of knowing is also simply the knower itself. As we have seen in several contexts, this situation represents the simple condition of pure consciousness that in its *vimarśa* aspect is continuously doubled back on itself to engender self-referential consciousness. As the awareness, the power of consciousness, withdraws effortlessly from the entanglement with external objects and begins to emulate the native condition of supreme consciousness, it becomes *khecarī;* it moves in the void. This state is described as empty because of the experiential contrast with the apparent fullness of objectivity that precedes it. Abhinavagupta emphasizes the fullness of the *kha*, however, because it is the creative matrix (*mātṛkā*). This is the secret cave (*guha*) of the Heart, the endless abyss or chasm, the mysterious opening (*yoni*) in the body of the Goddess which gives birth to the entire universe. The *sādhaka* wishes to return to this powerful source of all being and when he does his high spiritual attainment is termed *khecarī-mudrā:* the spiritual posture that is sealed with the condition of moving-in-the-void.

In the very next verse of the *PT*, the Goddess continues her plea to

Bhairava. She says, "Powerful Lord! My very Self! Tell me that mysterious secret, great, unconcealed."[5] Once again, in his reading of this verse Abhinavagupta emphasizes essential doctrines of the tradition by a slightly eccentric reading of the Sanskrit text. The rendering above is Abhinavagupta's reading of, "*etad guhyaṃ mahāguhyam kathaya sva mama prabho.*" In his commentary, Abhinavagupta does not take *mahāguhyaṃ* at its prima facie reading of "great secret or mystery." Rather, he allows the term which precedes it, *guhyaṃ*, to establish that we are dealing with that which is mysterious, secret, concealed. Abhinavagupta glosses *guhyaṃ* as "preeminently secret" (*aprakaṭam atiśayena*). This gloss allows him to read the expression *mahāguhyaṃ* as two separate terms: *mahat*, "the great," and *aguhyam*, "the unconcealed."

The "great" is unconcealed because, as he glosses it, it is self-luminous. There is finally nothing that is able to conceal the great consciousness of Bhairava except his own free power to cover himself over and to reveal himself. In so doing, Bhairava achieves, firstly, the manifestation of finite objects and, secondly, the revelation of the intrinsic nature of those finite objects, the self-luminous unconcealable and mysterious Self.

Abhinavagupta indulges in another eccentric but wholly grammatical reading in this verse when he translates *kathayasva*. On the surface, this word is simply the second person, singular imperative *ātmanepada* of the root *kath*. Abhinavagupta wishes to separate the ending *-sva*, however, and interpret this as a vocative addressed by the Goddess to the Self, the Bhairava. He is able to sustain this reading grammatically because the form *kathaya* may then be interpreted as the imperative second person singular of the *parasmaipada*. The point of these clever grammatical manipulations is to underscore the importance of the Self, of the 'I', as the enormous, secret and yet unconcealable reality about which the Goddess is inquiring: she is inquiring about herself, about the *kaulinī śakti*, which abides in the Heart. Abhinavagupta says in the *PTv:*

> The manifestation is the Heart inasmuch as it is identical with the group of phonemes from *A* to *KṢA*. It is called the power, the secret (*guhyam*). The condition of the spiritual hero (*vīra*) is the seat. Everything resides there because it is the receptacle. The receptacle and what it contains are mutually of the very same nature. As it says (in the *Bhagavad Gītā* 4:20), "He discovers the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self."[6]

The natural metaphors presented here all seem to point to the 'I' as their final referent. This chapter will conclude with a more detailed exploration of the nature of the 'I', the *AHAM*, which is the infinite consciousness in which the *yogin* wishes to attain the freedom of movement known as

the *khecarī-mudrā.* At present, however, it is possible to note that in the *PTlv* Abhinavagupta describes true subjectivity as composed of the power of space:

> For the power of space (*ākāśa-śakti*) is inherent in the individual soul as the true subjectivity, which is at once empty of objects and which also provides a place in which objects may be known.[7]

Ocean and Wave

Another aspect of the Self in the Heart is revealed in its nature as ocean and wave. According to the tradition, the Heart is the ocean (*ambhonidhi, sindhu, samudra*), the ocean of light, the ocean of consciousness (*bhairavīya-cid-ambara*). The surface waters of this ocean of consciousness are massed into countless polarizing waves (*ūrmi*). Abhinavagupta writes in the *TĀ:*

> For that vibration, which is a slight motion of a special kind, a unique vibrating light, is the wave of the ocean of consciousness, without which there is no consciousness at all. For the character of the ocean is that it is sometimes filled with waves and sometimes waveless. This consciousness is the essence of all. The insentient universe has the consciousness as its essence, because its very foundation is dependent on that, and its essence is the great Heart.[8]

The waves are part of the essential character of the ocean even if the ocean at times is apparently without waves. The vibration, the *spanda*, is responsible for setting up the motions, patterns, and activities on the surface of consciousness. As we have seen, the *spanda* is continuously operative, even if at times patterns do not appear on the surface of consciousness. The ocean of consciousness is the foundation of all the finite waves that appear on its surface. In essence wave and ocean are identical. However, the ocean is unbounded (*aparimita*) in its nature, while the waves of activity are finite.[9]

> It is the powers of the Self (*svaśakti*) that, emerging from the ocean of consciousness and uniting together in various and sundry ways, create the finite realities. The mutual interaction of the powers to manifest the finite is termed the power of action (*kriyā-śakti*).[10]

In the commentary to *śloka*-s 5-9a of the *PTlv*, Abhinavagupta summarizes the process of manifestation as it emerges from a slowing down of the vibratory speed of the expansion and contraction of the *visarga.* In a

parallel process, the fifty phonemes, beginning with the vowels, and the thirty-six *tattva*-s, which constitute the building blocks of manifestation, emerge. The details of this process clarify the intrinsic nature of manifestation as a sounding-forth that begins with the infinitely subtle sounding of *spanda* and becomes progressively more perceptible, dense, gross, and solid. We have already alluded to this process and to the complex correspondences between the various phonemes as they emerge through various levels of the process and the different elements or principles. The process of manifestation continues until the infinite consciousness of Bhairava has been reduced, apparently, to the inertness and unconsciousness of a stone. It is this level of inertness (*jaḍatā*) that marks the outward limit of manifestation. From here the process of *sṛṣṭi* may be reversed and the voyage of return initiated. At the end of his description of this process Abhinavagupta states:

> Therefore, all this is at first formed of an undivided self-referential consciousness. But then, because of an act of self-divided consciousness, whose nature is an awareness of distinctions, it assumes the form of fifty cognitions which attain the state of being objects, and thus the group of external objects arises. The life of these principles results precisely because they are essentially moments of conscious cognition. This is the form of the *mātṛkā*.[11]

In the context of the metaphor of ocean and wave we may understand the difference between the two types of self-referential consciousness, what Abhinavagupta terms in this passage the undivided (*avibhāga-parāmarśa*), and self-divided (*vibhāga-parāmarśa*). We have seen that an essential feature of the absolute reality is the notion of *vimarśa:* consciousness is always self-referential, it is turned back on itself. In the above passage Abhinavagupta's term *parāmarśa* has been rendered as "cognition." The image of a wave is useful in clarifying the nature of these cognitions.

Vimarśa can be understood as a doubling back of consciousness on itself in which the internal wave motion (*spanda*) inherent in consciousness is in synchrony with itself. We might extend the image and imagine that as one particular 'current' within the ocean of consciousness surges onto another current of consciousness, the two currents, or more precisely, the movement of the various *śakti*-s, blend in a synchronized fashion. This process results in an evenness (*samatā*), a perfectly synchronized blending and merging of these currents in a balanced way such that obvious patterns or disturbances do not occur.

We might understand the situation of *parāmarśa* as the same process: consciousness doubles back on itself. In this case, however, the internal wave motion of one *śakti* is not in synchrony with that of another. Thus,

as the two 'masses', or currents of consciousness, collide, disturbances are set up, and interference patterns occur. These disturbances are areas of patterned activity which result from the interference caused by the merging of the *śakti*-s. They could be understood to constitute the generative matrices that result in finite objects and may be seen as discrete event-areas. At first exceedingly subtle, these event-areas increase in solidity as they cast a shadow downward through the various levels of the process of manifestation.

Thus, as Abhinavagupta says above, the different powers of the Self, of the Lord, intermingling with each other in various ways, create the patterns that result in the specific cognitions of apparently separate and finite objects. Objects are indeed finally 'cognitions', because they are nothing more than the event-areas within the Supreme. Perception is thus a process in which the infinite consciousness encounters its own interference patterns and takes cognizance of them. Furthermore, just as in the Sāṃkhya, it might be noted that the word *objects* includes all of the psychological structures of the awareness of the individual person. Abhinavagupta makes this point explicitly in the *PTlv* when he states that even the *puruṣa* (and here he departs radically from the Sāṃkhya) is to be reckoned among the class of knowable objects. In this sense, the individual finds himself truly sunken within the ocean of consciousness. Thus, as the opening verses of the *MVT* proclaim, "He is the Savior of all of those who find themselves immersed in the ocean of the world."[12]

Here knowable objects are in essence nothing more than the absolute consciousness, but with the difference that objects which appear to be solid and separate are in reality discrete areas of patterning set up by the internal interferences of the *śakti*-s. By contrast absolute consciousness is just that—unbounded and unconstrained by a pattern of any sort. The language of manifestation leads one to conceptualize the process of *sṛṣṭi* as an emergence *out* of Śiva, as a separation. Consequently, it also leads one to think of the process of return as a reentrance into Śiva. However, from the supreme viewpoint, the claim is made by the tradition that nothing ever really emerges from Śiva. The entire *sṛṣṭi* is always within the all-pervasive reality. Similarly, it is not that we must travel far beyond the manifested world in order to locate the interior universe of the ocean within the Heart. To speak of distance, of return, of a path, may be useful aids for the spiritual practitioner; in reality, however, all objects, all beings, all possible experiences are continuously and eternally bathed in that ocean.

Abhinavagupta's images of ocean and waves derive from the experiential absorption (*samāveśa*) in the Heart. The *ŚS* states, "Abiding in this spiritual posture, he plunges easily into the lake."[13] Kṣemarāja clarifies in his comment that,

He easily plunges into the lake, the ocean of supreme immortality (*parāmṛta-samudre*), whose characteristic is the limpid capacity to spring up (*ucchalatā*) and is thus the cause of the advancing streams of the unbroken, continuous flow of the universal realities.[14]

In the final verses of his *ŚSV*, Kṣemarāja refers to the *bodhasudhāsindhu*, the ocean of nectar of enlightenment:

He who by means of this teaching perceives on all sides the universe like a mass of foam in the midst of the ambrosial ocean of consciousness, he is declared to be the one Śiva Himself.[15]

In addition Silburn comments:

Allusion au *sudhāsindhu*, océan de nectar qui parmi les 60 océans de la mythologie indienne est le plus intérieur: frais, procurant l'immortalité, il symbolise la Conscience infinie. Son nectar enivrant, boisson des dieux védiques, dispense l'immortalité et met fin aux limites de l'existence.[16]

Finally, it is not out of place here to cite a related passage from the *RV*:

The whole universe is set in your essence within the ocean, within the Heart, in the life-span. Let us win your honeyed wave that is brought to the face of the waters as they flow together.[17]

Imagery of immersion (*nimajjana*) is important in this context. It has implications of sinking down, of diving, of plunging into, of bathing, of penetrating, and of submersion. In this way the highest spiritual practice is likened to a purification that is effected by simple and easeful (*sukham*) sliding into the ocean that is within the Heart. Abhinavagupta repeatedly makes reference to this process. In the chapter of the *TĀ* devoted to the Kaula practices he says:

These same divinities are likewise to be worshipped and "practiced" in one's own body. By whatever object of practice, whether it be the appeased form which is to be obtained by means of the consciousness in the Heart, one obtains Śiva in his quiescent, appeased condition like an ocean without waves (*galitatarañgārṇava*). Once one has attained this appeased condition, all the groups of divinities which reside in the wheel, leave off all their activities, and remain immobile, as if suspended in the void, devoid of bliss.[18]

Similarly, in another chapter, Abhinavagupta expounds the various kinds

of ritual bath that the practitioner may take—in water, in earth, in the wind, and in the ether. He continues:

> He who immerses himself in the light of the sun and moon, mentally contemplating the condition of Śiva, is purified of all stains. . . . The Supreme Lord, the great lake where all practices are abandoned, is nothing more than the Self. He who abides immersing all into this lake, is both the pure and the purifier.[19]

Abhinavagupta is clearly playing here with the powerful ideas relating to bathing as a religious duty, and the consequent attainment of purity and avoidance of impurity. While he does not reject the actual practice of bathing the body, he seems to imply that it is the inner bathing in the ocean of consciousness that results in the attainment of the highest purity. It is the vision of the limitless Self, of the immortal being, that removes the taint of impurity which is, in fact, nothing other than the idea of separation, the awareness of differences.[20]

In another passage, the notion of immersion occurs as part of the explanation of the nature of the attitude of devotion necessary to perform the ritual of sacrifice (*yāga*). In the *PTlv*, Abhinavagupta says that the sacrifice consists essentially in *visarga*, the power that manifests, maintains, and reabsorbs the universe. This statement may be linked to the ancient notion, described in *Ṛg Veda* 10.90, of the primordial sacrifice of the cosmic man (*puruṣa*), which results in the creation of the universe. In any case, Abhinavagupta describes the inner attitude of one who practices the various sacrificial rituals, and he emphasizes the importance of the inner state of expansion of the practitioner as the prerequisite for the successful practice of the highest form of sacrifice. In his explanation the term *nimajjana*, immersion plays a key role in the explanation of *bhakti*. He says:

> In order that this sacrifice be successful, one must properly honour (the Goddess) with fragrant flowers which effortlessly allow for an entrance into the Heart; and by flowers are meant all substances—external and internal which nourish the Heart because they bestow their own nature within the Heart. By the expression "according to his powers," he means that power which is the expansion of his essential nature, because one who has not appropriated the essential nature of that power is not suited to perform the sacrifice since he is still "contracted;" or else he refers to the blissful external power which is useful for developing the inner power. This outer power is found in external materials suitable for the sacrifice such as ablutions, unguents, incense, betel leaf, spirituous liquors, and so forth.
>
> But one may ask, how should he sacrifice properly? With the highest devotion,

> with reverence and with great faith, all of which grant him absorption. This great devotion consists in effecting the subordination of the finite levels of the body, the vital breath, and the subtle body. This subordination consists in accomplishing a state of humble devotion, whose nature is an immersion into the essence of that which results in the removal of those finite levels and the establishment of the superiority of the supreme consciousness, whose nature is the Divinity which has been described and which is to be sacrificed to.[21]

Here again we see that the essential component of this immersion is an entrance into the truly free and unbounded condition of Śiva. The practitioner must plunge into the waters of the ocean of the Heart and must sound its depths. This immersion purifies him of the illusion of duality, of the shackles of finiteness, and prepares him to emerge back into the finite world with a fresh and clear vision of the omnipresence of Śiva. Alper eloquently summarizes many of these ideas by noting that,

> These clues suggest two related lines of imaginal explication: *prakāśa* as spatial effervescence, and *prakāśa* as the sea at the heart of all things. . . . The theology of *prakāśa* speaks not only the language of scientific prose, but also in what one might call a language of spiritual and emotional liquidity. It hints at the dissolution of ordinary ego consciousness, at immersion in the cave, the bottomless center of all phenomena; it seems to speak of overflowing, being brimful, of being afloat in the depths of the sea.[22]

It is precisely this "language of spiritual and emotional liquidity" that forms the focus for this exploration of the nature of the Heart.

The Immortal Moon

We have examined the nature of the Heart as an absolute reality that is ceaselessly in the process of expanding and contracting. In the *PTlv* we read that the Heart is the moon.[23] The symbolic linkages at work here are complex. On one level, the visible moon presents a continuous reminder of expansion and contraction. The infinitely fast motion of the absolute reality has been slowed down in the phases of the moon so that its periodic cyclical nature can be perceived clearly. The bright lunar fortnight (*śuklapakṣa*), from the new moon through the waxing crescent and the waxing gibbous, to the full moon (*pūrṇimā*), presents the phase of expansion. Similarly, the dark lunar fortnight (*kṛṣṇapakṣa*), which moves through the waning gibbous to the waning crescent and to the new moon (*amāvāsyā*), presents the phase of contraction. Each lunar fortnight is divided into fifteen lunar stations, *tithi*, the lunar days. The

entire process lasts a little less than twenty-seven and one half solar days. The visible expansion and contraction of the moon presents a continuous reminder of the expansive/contractive nature of all of reality.

However, Abhinavagupta's concern is not so much with the moon as an external feature of the visible reality, as it is with the moon as a symbol for the supreme reality of the Heart. In describing the process by which the Heart functions as the source of the manifestational process, Abhinavagupta equates each one of the vowels of the Sanskrit alphabet to one of the *tithi*-s, the lunar stations. In the *PT* we read:

> Now all the vowels from A to *bindu* are the lunar stations, joined with time. The moon and the sun are said to be within these.[24]

Abhinavagupta expands this explanation in his comment, saying:

> In the center of this conjunction of expansion and contraction are to be found the Ultimate (*anuttara: A*), bliss (*ānanda: Ā*), will (*icchā: I*), domination (*īśanā: Ī*), opening (*unmeṣa: U*), and decrease (*ūnatā: Ū*).
> When in will (*I*) and domination (*Ī*), there is an appearance of objects at first very vague, and then more clearly, then the four phonemes *Ṛ, Ṝ, Ḷ, Ḹ* appear. From the union of will (*I*) and domination (*Ī*) with the Ultimate (*A*) and bliss (*Ā*), result the phonemes *E* and *AI*. Similarly, from the union of opening (*U*) and decrease (*Ū*) with the Ultimate (*A*) and bliss (*Ā*) result the phonemes *O* and *AU*.
> Thereupon, when that which appears as the knowable object is reduced to a residue of latent impressions, there appears the *bindu*, *Ṃ*, whose characteristic is that of being a knowing subject.
> By this means, the process of manifestation is completed and perfected. In this way, we have the supreme Bhairava couple which consists of the energy of Emission which is formed of the completely full consciousness and bliss.[25]

The process of manifestation of the vowels is said to originate from the midst of the expansion and contraction of the Rudra-dyad. The first group that appears are the vowels *A, I, U*, and their corresponding long vowels, *Ā, Ī, Ū*. The first three vowels are particularly important as is revealed by their identification with the three terms *anuttara, icchā*, and *unmeṣa*. These vowels are praised by Abhinavagupta as "the supreme effulgence of Bhairava, the power of the supreme Lord in all its fullness."[26] The vowels in the next group of four, *Ṛ, Ṝ, Ḷ, Ḹ* are known collectively as the *amṛta-bīja*-s, the seeds of immortality, a name which alludes to the important connection between the moon (*candra*, but also *soma*) and the nectar of immortality (*soma*, but also *amṛta*). The following group of four vowels, the diphthongs *E, AI, O, AU*, results when the Supreme

unites with each of its partners in the first triplet: *A* (or *Ā*) joining with *I* (or *Ī*) gives as a result first *E* and then *AI*. Similarly, when *A* joins with *U* (or *Ū*), first *O* and then *AU* results.

Some might see in this description a kind of post facto creation myth varnished lightly over the first rules of Sanskrit *saṃdhi*, euphonic combination. To dismiss the Kaula phoneme mysticism in this way is to miss the essential connection that these sounds have to the structuring of the *mantra*-s. If these sounds are the first rumblings of vibration within the absolute reality as it prepares to manifest, then they are significantly close to the absolute source which the *yogin* wishes to approach. Their mutual connections, as they unfold from the absolute, are crucial inasmuch as they grant a knowledge of the salvational combinations of mantric sounds that are structured around these powerful vowels. This fact is of far greater interest to the tantric practitioner than the fact that these combinations are also the basis for the structuring of the rules that govern the grammar of the Sanskrit language.

Of the two remaining vowels in the list, the *bindu*, *AṂ*, is counted as the fifteenth and final *tithi*, while the *visarga*, *Ḥ*, is not counted among the *tithi*-s because it is the source of the entire process that displays these sounds. Abhinavagupta tells us that the *visarga* inheres generically in each of the preceding fifteen sounds:

> In this respect, the Emissional state (*visarga: Ḥ*) is the universal form generically implicit in each of the fifteen different moments and thus it does not require separate consideration.[27]

The term *tithi* is glossed in the following way:

> The vowels which begin with *A* and end with the *bindu* are called *tithi*, lunar stations, because they fill up the "stations" (*sthiti*) of the moon of awakened consciousness. In this way, the Emissional Power of the moon of enlightened consciousness, which is composed of bliss and light, that is, the Emissional Power of the Ultimate, is filled by these fifteen stations.[28]

The vowels are termed *svara* because they shine by themselves (*svayam rajantaḥ*); they are self-luminous, and they are a result of the process of sounding that occurs when consciousness is in a state of self-referral.

> These fifteen are called vowels (*svara*), because their nature is a sounding whose character results from the self-referral of consciousness; and because they shine by themselves (*svayaṃ rājantaḥ*), and thus with respect to the external world are self-luminous. Within them are the moon and sun,

> contraction and expansion. Within them as their nature is the *visarga* which is made up of two dots (*bindu*).[29]

We see that the *visarga* is the source of the process of manifestation that gives rise to the vowels; it inheres in each of the vowels, and it is fulfilled by these same vowels.

The expression *bodhacandra*, the moon of enlightened consciousness, makes the relationship between the moon and the state of fulfilled consciousness even clearer. Just as the moon expands from the new moon to the full moon (*pūrṇimā*), so consciousness expands from its condition as the finite *puruṣa* to the fulfilled state of Bhairava. The process of expansion and contraction never ceases: as soon as the fullness of Bhairava is attained, increasing contractions that lead to the finite realities and selves begin to function. In the same way, the full moon inevitably diminishes to its 'death' in the new moon.

The expansion and contraction that are apparent to an observer, however, are sustained by an underlying reality that is not affected by the expansion and contraction. Bhairava is not affected by the expansion and contraction that is his nature. So also, the moon which is 'born', 'grows', and 'dies', is, in fact, upheld by an underlying immortal essence, the *soma*, or *amṛta*. This immortal essence is hidden in the cave where it is termed *Amā*, "together." The new moon, *Amāvāsya*, is so termed because it is then that the sun and moon dwell together. *Amā* satiates and satisfies the universal reality; its nature is to feed and sustain because it is the water of immortality. The other fifteen parts of the moon pass away, but not the sixteenth part, which sustains and upholds them.[30] This sixteenth part, which is the *visarga*, is seen dyadically in the term *soma*, which is broken apart for these purposes into *Sa* and *Umā:* the God and the Goddess joined together.[31]

It is *soma*, this immortal, underlying essence, which is both the moon and the Heart, which the *sādhaka* must employ to go beyond the vibratory polarities of the finite world. This is the recommendation of the last and perhaps most important teaching given in the *PT* verses:

> The 'seed' which has no beginning and no end, which moves in the midst of the stations, expanding, this he should meditate in the lotus of the Heart, and always practice the rays of the moon.[32]

Abhinavagupta explains this verse in the following way:

> The 'seed' whose function is to carry the meaning, is the Heart, and its meaning is the "rays of the moon" (*somāṃśu*). (Another meaning could be the filaments

> of the *soma* plant). The teaching, then, is that he should practice according to the method of non-difference between the signifier and the signified, [where the rays of the moon] are interpreted as the great quantity of light which is joined together (*saṃghaṭṭa*), and the moon (*soma* equalling *Sa* and *Umā*) is the pair of the blessed Lord Bhairava and his power.[33]

A variety of meanings converge here: the Heart is established as the ocean of infinite light, and as the abyss of profound darkness. In a sense, the Heart as moon is capable of mediating between these two images—the moon of great light, the moon of darkness. In addition, the moon is the container of the *soma*, of the *amṛta*, of the waters of the ocean of immortality that sustain and transform the finite realities that have emerged from that ocean. The Heart as moon is thus a priceless goblet from which one drinks the ambrosia of bliss.[34] One comes to the realization of Śiva by imbibing the nectar of the Heart:

> If having learned about the nature of death and having become like gods, you drink, after having imbibed the oceanic poison, you drink the nectar that comes from the ocean of consciousness, gushing forth by the squeezing and attraction created by the unmoving force of the Heart, then, without a doubt you will become identified with Śiva.[35]

The nectar that pours out from the moon is likened to the melted butter that is poured out as an oblation in offering to the gods, who are so gladdened and heartened by it that they produce manifest reality:

> At this point, the moon, which is made up of sixteen parts, and which is slow in devouring the Emission, the moon, the one who animates, shining brightly, emits the nectar of immortality into the fire of consciousness; this divine nectar like the melted butter on the sacrificial ladle satisfies and gladdens the deities of consciousness with the aid of the powers of will, knowledge, and action, through the subtle openings. As soon as this nectar of the Emission is emitted into the fire of consciousness, then the entire wheel of the six paths is poured out as an oblation. Thus the Emission of the Lord, of the Supreme, is the mistress of the Embodied Cosmos, and its agitation corresponds to the various phonemes from *K* to *H*, while its pouring forth is signalled by the (fifty) principles.[36]

We have seen that the last of the vowels to be counted among the fifteen *tithi*-s is the *bindu*, *AṂ*. Abhinavagupta clarifies the meaning of the *bindu* when he says in the *PTlv* that the *bindu* arises when all knowable objects are reduced to latent impressions and the isolated knowing subject appears.[37] Abhinavagupta clarifies this in the *TĀ*:

> The undivided light which shines in the abodes of the moon, sun, and fire—this is the supreme *bindu*. As is said by the Lord in the *Tattva-rakṣā-vidhāna*, the point or dot (*vindu*) which stands within the circle of the lotus of the Heart is to be known by means of a special absorption as characterized by the triad of man, power, and Śiva. The point is a stainless liberator. This point is a sound whose nature is a vibrating hum (*nāda*), and it is to be found in all living beings.[38]

Note that the *bindu* comprises both an undivided light and a sounding, a vibrating roar. The essential distinction of *prakāśa-vimarśa* may thus be seen as reduplicated in the individual point of consciousness. The *bindu* is at once pure illumination (*prakāśa*), as well as the vibratory sound (*vimarśa*) generated as that pure illumination continuously maintains self-consciousness by referring back onto itself. The *bindu* is spoken of as pure consciousness.[39] Consciousness as the *bindu* is both the supreme undifferentiated light as well as being the *nāda*, the subtle vibratory sounding that is the source of all language. Kṣemarāja, in his commentary on the *Śiva-sūtra*-s, refers to the *bindu* as the *paraprakāśa*, the supreme light. In a long passage which Kṣemarāja quotes from the *Tantra-sadbhāva*, the central *bindu* is related to the *kuṇḍalinī* that encloses it by coiling up around it in the form of a snake.[40]

The *bindu* as the creative droplet is also related to *soma*, that powerful liquid, the nectar that bestows immortality. As such, it joins the symbolism of the moon that is always associated with the *soma*. In his commentary on the *Netra-tantra*, Kṣemarāja refers to this nectar.

> Then, the nectar of Śiva, which is conceived of as being *nāda* and is the master of the *sadāśiva*, this nectar which is the power and seed of manifestation, and which has as its nature the object of manifesting clearly the entire objective universe, falls on the head of the *bindu* which is to be manifested, and which is the essence of the entire universe.[41]

One of the ways in which the *bindu* was employed in Sanskrit was known as the *ardhacandra*, the phonetic mark for nasalization of a syllable, which was in the shape of a half moon. Another interesting symbolic relationship is that the *nāda* in the passage just quoted is called the *sṛṣṭi-vīrya*, which at one and the same time invokes the power of manifestation as well as the sexual symbolism of the seed of manifestation. This intermingling of symbolisms is even more apparent when one explores the nature of *mantra*-s, which are at once seed, *bīja*-s, as well as powerful bits of sound that can bring into being the entire structure of spiritual experience.

More relevant here, however, is the important triad of moon, sun, and fire. Until now we have been considering the nature of the Heart as

moon, but within the realm of manifestation the moon forms part of this important triad. The meaning of this triad can be explored in terms of the essential structure of finite awareness, which always involves a finite knower, a process of knowing, and a known object. The finite knower, (*vedaka*) is equated with the *bindu*, which in terms of this particular triad is said to be the fire (*vahni, agni*). The process of knowing (*vedana*), is linked with the sun (*sūrya*) and the objects that are known (*vedya*) are linked with the moon (*soma*). In a meditation taught in the *TĀ*, Abhinavagupta expands on this triad:

> Now as for the Supreme, as it is called here, there is a meditation on it. The light, the freedom, whose essential nature is consciousness contains within it all principles, realities, things. This light abides in the Heart. It has been described in this way in the *Triśiro-mata:*
>
> The knower of truth sees that reality within the Heart like a flower within which are all external and internal things, a flower shaped like a plantain bloom. He should meditate with undistracted mind on the union there in the Heart of the sun, moon, and fire. From this meditation, as from the agitation caused by two firesticks, one comes to experience the oblation fire of the great Bhairava which expands and flames violently in the great firepit known as the Heart. Having arrived at that effulgence of Bhairava, which is the possessor of the powers and full of the powers, one should contemplate its identity with the abode of the knowing subject, the means of knowledge, and the known object. That triad is the very same triad as the triad of powers of fire, sun, and moon, as well as that of the always arising powers of *Parā, Parāparā and Aparā.*[42]

In this rich description, the Heart is seen as a sacrificial fire-pit within which the light of consciousness continuously blazes and flames. Here the triad of sun, moon, and fire, which is to say, the knower, the process of knowing, and the object of knowledge are intertwined. The light of the Ultimate flames in the Heart like a flower, specifically, like a plantain bloom, which is a thick, dark red blossom. The Heart is also often referred to elsewhere as a lotus blossom. The phrase "lotus of the Heart" (*hṛtpadma, hṛdambhoja*) becomes almost a stereotypical phrase in the Indian tradition. Nevertheless, it is fraught with symbolic meaning. The creative ocean in the Heart nourishes the growth of the plant, the cosmic tree that represents the entire manifest universe. The Goddess who abides in the Heart is often represented in Hindu ritual by a pot full of water from which emerges a single mango leaf. This image of verdant growth and creativity springing from a seed nourished by water resonates with the organic interconnectedness of all things as they emerge from the reality in the Heart that is represented by the 'seed' of sound, that is, the *mantra* of

the Heart. The following *PT* verses describe this potential presence of the universe in the 'seed':

> Just as the large tree is to be found potentially in the banyan tree seed, so this world, both inanimate and animate abides in the 'seed' of the Heart.[43]

In the process of describing the meditation to be performed on this 'seed' of the Heart, Abhinavagupta describes the Heart as a lotus:

> This Heart which moves in the midst of the lunar stations made up of time—of the All—is present in everything in the form of an undifferentiated self-referential consciousness; one should continually meditate on this seed of the Heart as having penetrated into one's own Heart, into one's consciousness, which is in the form of the lotus-flower because it plays at expanding and contracting.[44]

Aside from this vegetable and arboreal symbolism, there remains another link between the Heart and the lotus. This other link is occasioned perhaps by the fact that the central *cakra* appears to be shaped like a lotus when perceived by the subtle vision of the *yogin*. This link might explain the antiquity of this lotus image which has occurred persistently for many centuries, at least as far back as the texts of the *Upaniṣad*-s.

AHAM

Every one of these natural metaphors for the Heart has pointed to the nature of the transcendent Ego, the point of free and self-illuminating consciousness that resides in the Heart and is known as the *AHAM*. The symbolic meanings of the phonemes, especially the vowels, have been sufficiently explored to show why this particular term would have been an especially powerful representation of the triadic reality of the Heart, Śiva, *śakti*, and the finite being (*nara*). The first vowel of the term for the 'I', is *A*, representing the *anuttara*—the infinite, unbounded reality of the Ultimate. The next vowel may be seen as both the *visarga, AḤ*, and the last phoneme, *HA*. As the *visarga*, this portion of the egoity represents the Emissional Power of manifestation of the Goddess. As the last phoneme, *HA*, the entire range of manifestation is represented from its beginning in the *anuttara* to its culmination in the last phoneme. In addition, the phoneme *HA* is said to represent the liberating energy of the *kuṇḍalinī*. Finally, as the last portion of the manifestation, the finite self, represented by the *bindu*, may be seen as the turnaround point for

the process of manifestation. From here the individual practitioner may employ the energy of the *visarga* to return to the Ultimate.[45] Abhinavagupta explains this process of analyzing the *AHAM* and its corresponding mirror image, *MAHA*, the great, in a long passage from the *PTv*, which is worth quoting at some length:

> Truly, this entire universe which is made up of material elements, senses, pleasure, pain, body, breath, individual awareness and consciousness, abides in the one, supreme consciousness of Bhairava, the Highest Lord. It abides there in an undifferentiated fashion simply as awakened consciousness. Now, this form, structured out of awakened consciousness, is indestructible, for if it were to disappear all would become darkness. Nevertheless, even then, there is no separation which, as is known, is based on a mutual nonexistence. Beings abide truly as the universal spirit. If they did not reside in it, a breakdown would occur in the primary intention which moves the appropriate activity of the sensory organs. Thus, there is simply no separation to be found there, only the unbroken cognition of the 'I' alone, which causes all differences to disappear. While the 'I' is the origin of all beings, in this state the appropriate manifestations of objectivity have not yet arisen. So if one can clearly abide there, then one attains repose. This is the *kaulika* function. Then this entire universe made up of the thirty-six principles is manifested from Śiva by his own power. Śiva's most important aspect is the supreme *śakti*. He is the possessor of that *śakti*, whose nature is consciousness, the universal vibration. In him it reposes in the essential form of the Self, in the chiefmost *śakti*, as a vibration of difference within Bhairava. Therefore all beings rest in the essential nature of the Self. As it says in the verse which reads, "In which all this exists . . .", this is the Supreme, the essence of power and sovereignty, the great which is composed of consciousness and freedom. Even though in reality it is one, when it is being investigated for the purpose of entering into the various methods and instructions, the Supreme Lord separates that which is essentially one and makes a universal distinction the nature of which is Śiva and *śakti*.
>
> That which is mine, in the space of my Heart, where, in what kind of essential form does it abide? This Heart is the abode, the dwelling place, the resting place of all beings. That which is *mine*, belongs to the perceiving subject. For of all existing appearances beginning with blue and extending as far as the worm, there is nothing whatsoever which may be termed blue, and so on, unless it be penetrated by a portion of consciousness. So "my" consciousness attains a portion of the uninterrupted astonishment and then, when it encounters blue, it experiences, "Blue appears to me."
>
> That which is the space of the Heart which belongs to me, in which are found all beings within the infinite, there the entire universe, whose nature is represented by the sound *MAMA* (mine), has gone, and is completely held. But when it abandons its differentiated nature the space becomes empty. Then my Heart takes on a double nature, which is both differentiated and

> non-differentiated, supreme consciousness and non-supreme consciousness, and becomes the place of repose, the dwelling place of limits, that is, the 'I'. But the space, when it functions to produce the reabsorption of all, is *MA-HA-A*, the condition of man is dissolved into the power of the *bindu*. Then we have *MA*, the *kuṇḍalinī* which has entered the energy of *HA*, and *A*, which abides in the unchecked and perfectly full astonishment, and which is not separated from the all. This is the space of my Heart. Thus, it is that from which the universe has come forth, and in which it reposes. This is the supreme, the eternal, whose nature can never be concealed, the undeniable, and which discloses itself by itself. Thus, this is unhesitatingly the meaning. That which is the *kaulika* stream of manifestation, that is the Supreme, which is situated in the Space of my Heart.[46]

This remarkable analysis of the nature of the transcendent egoity summarizes many of the themes that we have been exploring at some length in this book: the primacy of consciousness as the matrix in which the entire display of manifestation occurs; the mutual encapsulation of the supreme consciousness and the manifested universe; and also the *kaulika* function that abides in the Heart and that provides in the very nature of consciousness itself (that is in the *AHAM* which is also that which is mine, *MAMA*), the ascending and effortless path of absorption back into the Supreme. Standing between the Supreme Śiva (*A*), and the manifested universe (*AṂ*) is always the Goddess (*AḤ, HA*) who mediates and energizes the exchanges between the highest and the manifested reality.

In addition, this passage points to the most intimate and elusive sensation of personal identity that marks all experiences. This is the mystery of the 'I', which delicately stands behind each and every perception. Abhinavagupta shows that the entire universe arises and has its being within that consciousness that abides, in its most universal form, in the space of the Heart. When, during the practice of meditative absorption, the *sādhaka* leaves behind the experience of body, perceptions, sensations, thoughts, and feelings, he comes to the pure and undifferentiated abode of the 'I', which he unhesitatingly recognizes as the supreme Self.

This passage forms a basis for the consideration in the next chapter of the nature of *mantra*, which condenses within it the salvational energy of consciousness. This energy, known as the *mantravīrya*, the potency of the *mantra*, is directly related to the 'I'. As Abhinavagupta says:

> In the pure and natural cognition of the form of the *mantra*, the 'I' itself is manifested, thus say the ancient masters. This is the very essence of illumination of light. This, in fact, is the very force of all the *mantra*-s, whose nature is the Heart. Without this they would be as if inert, like living beings without a heart.[47]

Similarly, in the *PTv*, Abhinavagupta explains:

> The tantric practitioner who has penetrated into the Heart whose essence is pure existence and potency, who because of the particular efficacy of the practice of the ritual of adoration is capable of remembering perfectly the *mantra*, thus attains to a very high degree the potency of the *mantra* which is the reality known as the Heart. By the peculiar efficacy of the ritual of adoration he crosses over completely, either by himself or as a result of the clear and pristine lotus-word of the teacher, and obtains the power of the *mantra*, whose essential characteristic is the Heart, and in this way he attains liberation in this very life.[48]

Let us now turn to a more detailed analysis of the nature of this concept of the Heart-*mantra*.

CHAPTER 8

The Heart as Mantra

The *PTlv* ends by stating that the principal truth it teaches is the Heart. This is an ambiguous statement because the term *hṛdaya* names both the Ultimate reality of Śiva and the *mantra* that constitutes the principal instrument for reaching this Ultimate reality. As a result of this ambiguity, the text alternates between a discussion of tantric cosmology, which places the Ultimate in relation to man, and an exposition of the tantric *sādhanā*, which clarifies the methods that must be employed in order to come to the experience of the Ultimate. We have examined in some detail the notion of the Heart as Ultimate. In this chapter we shall consider the Heart as *mantra*.

The idea of the Heart as *mantra* culminates a process of compression and simplification in the field of religious practice that is first announced, in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition, in Utpaladeva's *ĪPK*.[1] Toward the end of this text Utpaladeva introduces the notion of a new, easy path (*sughaṭa mārga nava*). We need not trace the long process of development in the Indian tradition that leads to this idea. Of course this idea appears quite generally in a number of older *tantra*-s, and is not necessarily an exclusively Kashmiri idea. Suffice it to say that a complex process of development culminates in a consolidation and simplification of the tantric *sādhanā* to such a great extent that it becomes possible, for example, for a *PT* verse to announce that all that is necessary for the attainment of liberation is the proper reception of a single *bīja-mantra*:

He who is not born of the *yoginī*, who is not Rudra, does not clearly obtain this

> Heart of the God of Gods, which immediately grants both liberation and union.
> (*commentary*)
> He who obtains this seed-*mantra*, in the very moment he obtains it, is no longer a bound creature. Because, when this seed-*mantra* is obtained, for him this Heart is produced. This Heart is the very condition of Bhairava. For that reason, as long as he is not born from the union of the pair—from the union of Rudra and the *yoginī* that is to say, as long as he has not opened his vision to the very Self, or in other words, until a "descent of energy" (*śaktipāta*) has not fallen on him, how then could this Heart appear to him?[2]

The *PTlv* presents this single *mantra* as a uniquely powerful and liberating religious vehicle. Abhinavagupta's commentary on the *PT* verses aims at clarifying the context in which it becomes meaningful to use the *mantra* as a short and easy path. The commentary presents the theoretical structure within which it becomes permissible for the entire process of *sādhanā* to be reduced to the reception of the Heart-*mantra*. This simplification of the path does not imply that the Tantra, in its non-dual Kashmir Shaiva inflection, does not retain a uniquely baroque complexity in its theoretical and ritual formulations. Indeed, it is perhaps in direct reaction to its own complexity that the tradition develops a countervailing short and easy path that peacefully coexists with the bewildering technicalia of the Tantra. Yet the *PT* verses insist on the centrality and importance of the Heart-*bīja*:

> He who has correctly carried out the procedure of adoration, and who remembers the seed, he successfully accomplishes his goal. The seed which has no beginning and no end, which moves in the midst of the stations, expanding, this he should meditate in the lotus of the Heart, and always practice the rays of the moon. Whatsoever desires he may long for, he will quickly obtain them. Immediately he is placed face to face with That, and obtains omniscience. Of that there is no doubt. Thus one obtains the fruit of the *mantra*, and therefore this is the Union of Rudra (*Rudrayāmala*). Perfection (*siddhi*) comes as a result of it and the attainment of omniscience.[3]

No doubt, there is a certain equivocation in the *PTlv* when it states that the reception of the *mantra* constitutes liberation. We know that the *mantra* is said to be essentially composed of the force and power of consciousness. This force is precisely the *AHAM*, the 'I', to which the practitioner aspires in order to attain liberation. When Abhinavagupta states that liberation is achieved as soon as the *mantra* is received, his initial meaning is that the eventual attainment of liberation is assured. In addition, he also means that once the practitioner has truly come to pronounce (*uccāra*), to remember (*smaran*), the *mantra*, this attainment will coincide, in effect, with the attainment of liberation. The true attainment of the *mantra* in this sense means the acquisition of the very force and power of

consciousness itself. Thus, in the *sādhanā* presented in the *PTlv*, method and goal eventually coincide because the essence of the *mantra* is identical with the goal of the tantric path.

This chapter will first examine the context of the *mantra*—the teacher who imparts it and the initiation through which it is imparted. We will then turn to investigate two aspects of the Heart-*mantra*: (1) the theoretical justification given for the use of a *mantra* in the attainment of liberation and (2) the meaning and symbolism of the *mantra*, especially as it is structured out of the three phonemes that compose it. In order to best understand the role of the Heart-*mantra* as it is set forth in Abhinavagupta's writings, we should begin by a brief review of what he has to say about the nature of the *guru* and the process of initiation (*dīkṣā*). We will then go on to a more detailed discussion of the theoretical aspects of the nature of the Heart-*mantra*.

Guru

In any discussion of *mantra* one immediately encounters the fact that the *mantra* is something that is given and received in the context of an initiation. Abhinavagupta clearly warns against the use of just any *mantra* that has been simply learned from a book.[4] From the discussion of *mantravīrya* in the previous chapter it is clear that the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition considers the empowering of the *mantra* by the enlightened consciousness of the teacher as the essential feature of the *mantra*. This empowering ensures the *mantra*'s efficaciousness as a salvational vehicle: it is only then that the *mantra* is considered to be soteriologically effective. This conviction has persisted into the modern period. Bharati, in surveying the tantric tradition up to the modern period, finds that it remains necessary that *mantra* be defined as that which is given in the context of initiation by the proper teacher. The various mantric "sounds" written in books, engraved in sculpture, or casually spoken are, therefore, not technically *mantra*-s.[5]

In addition to the *mantra* and the process of initiation, there is always someone who performs the initiation. This 'other' who initiates may be a human *guru* or it may be Śiva himself. In fact, the *guru* is always taken to be Śiva incarnate by reason of his condition of enlightenment. However, there are occurrences of a kind of spontaneous initiation by the 'inner' *guru* of the Heart who may appear to the *sādhaka* in a vision or a dream and initiate him into the use of the appropriate *mantra*. Even here, however, where there is no apparent 'external' teacher, initiation is effected by a higher power which is experienced by the *sādhaka* as other than himself. Abhinavagupta makes reference to this process of spontaneous initiation

in the *TĀ*, and describes a direct process of learning from the great Lord who resides in the Heart.[6] The knowledge that is gained in this direct way is often compressed into the powerful form of the *mantra*.[7]

We have already encountered the notion of the spiritual family composed of the *guru*, his wife, and his disciples. This 'family' (*kula*, but more technically *saṃtāna*) forms a self-sufficient unit whose foundation lies in the awakened self-referential consciousness of the teacher. The teacher, says Abhinavagupta, is only consciousness.[8] It is especially as a result of his condition of realization that the *guru* is considered to be an authoritative teacher. That is to say, even if the *guru* is not learned in the sacred scriptures, his condition as a realized being awakens within him a perfect knowledge of the meaning of all the sacred scriptures.[9] As a result, the primary characteristics of the *guru* are the achieved condition of realization, which he lives on a day-to-day basis, and his capacity to transmit realization directly to his disciples. Moreover, it is precisely this type of teacher, known as the "spontaneously-perfected" teacher (*saṃsiddhika-guru*), who seems to have been preferred by Abhinavagupta and the Kaula tradition. This sort of teacher was preferred because he was thought to have been initiated directly by the Goddess of his own consciousness.[10]

This preference may be a kind of autobiographical revelation on Abhinavagupta's part by which he indicates, in a roundabout way, that his own massive intellectual capacity results from the power of his own enlightenment, and not the other way around. Nevertheless, the relationship between intellectual insight and spiritual attainment remains a complex issue because Abhinavagupta does not disparage the power of the intellect (*bauddhajñāna*) as it contributes to the realization of Śiva (*pauruṣajñāna*).[11]

According to Abhinavagupta, in the final analysis it is the graceful will of Śiva that awakens in an individual the desire to attend upon a good teacher.[12] It is also Śiva's will that leads the individual to a particular teacher so that he may obtain both enlightenment and the enjoyment of fulfilled desires. The most important step the willing disciple must take is to search out and arrive at the feet of the teacher.

The *ŚSV* states: "*gurūpāyaḥ*," that is, "the *guru* is the way," and he is the only method that is needed.[13] This *sūtra* may be read in two different ways. In its first interpretation, "the *guru* is the method," it means that a willing attendance upon the teacher is the sole prerequisite for the achievement of liberation. On a surface level, this means that the *guru* will then make himself responsible for the training of the disciple, and will lead him through the various disciplines and practices that will secure for the disciple the realization of liberation. On a deeper level, however, the statement that the *guru* is the method reflects the idea that the *guru* represents the embodied wholeness that is the goal of the *sādhaka*. The face-to-face

meeting of the disciple and the *guru* does not represent merely an encounter between two separate beings, one of whom happens to be enlightened and can thus aid and help the other in the search for enlightenment. Rather, by entering into a relationship of service the disciple places his finite awareness in direct confrontation with the enlightened consciousness of the *guru*, which is the same unbounded consciousness the disciple wishes to attain. This meeting of the finite and infinite modes of consciousness represents the very condition of *vimarśa*, of consciousness doubled back on itself. We have already seen that it is the aspect of *vimarśa* that generates the *kaulika* function, the ever-functioning method of realization that abides perpetually in the Heart. As the disciple comes face to face with the *guru*, his finite consciousness encounters its own powerful and expanded source in the person of the teacher. In this situation, and without any conscious effort on his part, the disciple activates within himself the *kaulika* function. In this way devotion to the teacher represents the ideal spiritual posture for the disciple. It replicates, both externally in the personal connection established, and internally in terms of the inner meditative current that is released, the liberating, graceful, and self-referential nature of the unbounded consciousness of Śiva.

However, the *sūtra* we are considering, *gurūpāya*, may also be read as stating, "the method itself is the teacher." In this reading the implication seems to be that the method is the only teacher necessary. Once the disciple has been initiated into the method by the human *guru*, the very presence of the Heart-*mantra* in his awareness is thought to be enough to elicit from consciousness itself, or from the *guru* in the Heart, all the direction, guidance, and knowledge that is necessary for the satisfactory attainment of the goal of the path, the condition of freedom in life (*jīvan-mukti*). In this way, though the teacher binds the disciple in service and obedience, as well as in dedication to a set of practices and disciplines, the purpose of this binding is the attainment of freedom. From this point of view, by binding the disciple to the method, the teacher sets the disciple free. He replicates in the *sādhaka* the autonomy and self-sufficiency he himself enjoys. As a result, the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition places great emphasis on three methods that become teachers to the practitioners, and that will progressively further his liberation.

These methods involve the cultivation of the initial impulse of grace or descent of power (*śaktipāta*). It is this impulse, in the form of the will of Śiva, that has taken the disciple to the feet of the teacher. The relative strength or weakness of this impulse, as gauged by the teacher, differentiates the different grades of *sādhaka*-s. If the *śaktipāta* is violent, then an instance of the nonmethod (*anupāya*) occurs that involves no effort of practice or cultivation. Rather, the bound soul (*aṇu*) is instantaneously

freed from its bonds, and, if the *śaktipāta* is extremely violent, immediately abandons the body.[14]

However, if the *śaktipāta* is less violent, it must be cultivated, as it were, and made to bear its whole fruit by one of three methods. The first method is known as the "atomic" (*āṇava*) method, and employs the active-creative function of Śiva, the *kriyā-śakti*, which forms one of the angles of the triangle of the Heart. This atomic method employs what correspond roughly to the external limbs of *Yoga* (*bahir-aṅga*) as set forth by Patañjali in his *Yoga-sūtra*: physical postures, various breathing exercises, and the first rudiments of meditation. When the *sādhaka* has gained sufficient proficiency in this method, he then advances to the method of power (*śaktopāya*) in which the cognitive function of Śiva (*jñāna-śakti*) is brought into play. This may best be understood as an advanced stage of meditative accomplishment that ranges in the zone of transition from the very subtle internal apprehensions to the pure, nondifferentiated (*nirvikalpa*), contentless consciousness transcending all of the activities of awareness. The third and final method, known as *Śāmbhavopāya*, that is, the method relating to Śiva or Śambhu, employs the *icchā-śakti*, the impulsive function of the Heart. It is here that the practitioner fully employs the *visarga* by releasing himself into the inwardly flowing, expansive current of consciousness. Once the *sādhaka* has reached this stage he has become a *vīra* or spiritual hero.[15]

These three methods become the disciple's teacher in the sense that they progressively lead the practitioner to advance to higher stages of development. No sharp differentiation is established between these methods, and they shade imperceptibly into each other. At the core of each of them is the increasingly more fruitful employment of the *mantra*, which has been received through initiation.

Initiation

There are numerous descriptions of various sorts of initiation in the *TĀ*. The abundant variations in these rituals preclude a detailed discussion here. However, one passage that describes a rather advanced initiation for the empowerment of a new teacher, in which the transmission of a *mantra* plays a crucial role, follows.

> *Portion of a Rite for the Empowerment of a New Teacher*:
> The subtle breath which rises up from the heart of the master, and which is like the moon or a crystal, or a very fine thread, is composed of sound, which serenely travels along the series of centers until it comes to rest at last in the

> *dvādaśānta*. The *dvādaśānta* is the terminal point where the *suṣumṇā* comes to an end. The *suṣumṇā* is the central pathway of the three paths. At this point, after having caused his heart to overflow, the teacher must recite the *mantra*, which then blazes brightly like a submarine fire and bursts forth from his eye sockets and skin pores, until filling the tranquil top knot, in which are melted the streams of clarified butter, which has been propitiated and satisfied by the streams of clarified butter. The *mantra* then reaches the disciple's heart. In this way *mantra*-s give liberation when they are awakened and completely purified. In whatever center the *mantra* is then recited, whether it be the root, the bulb, the ether, the navel, the heart, the throat, the forehead, the palate, the half-moon, the obstructor, the sound, the limit of sound, the pervading one, the power, the equalized one, the transcendent, or the supreme center of the purified Self, in short, in whatever center, and whether all together or separately, that *mantra* is then the supreme *mantra*. This is the wisdom-vow described in the *Devyā-yāmala-tantra* which has as its purpose the establishment of the potency of *mantra*-s.[16]

Just as the continuous doubling back of consciousness upon itself generates a sounding, a vibration, which is the *śakti*, so too the face-to-face meeting of the *guru* and the disciple, as pure consciousness and the finite mind, produces a powerful vibratory sound which emerges from the depths of silence of the *guru*'s consciousness. This 'silent' sound which is charged with the potency of consciousness, of the 'I', is the *mantra*. It constitutes the sound-form of the Goddess, who then enters the boundaries of the *sādhaka*'s finite mind and begins to work a process of expansion that will lead to the full manifestation of *śaktipāta*.

The *PT* verses describe true spiritual knowledge as possessed of an independent initiatory character that is efficacious even if the external forms of the ritual are not performed:

> He who thus truly knows has received an initiation that leads to *nirvāṇa*, undoubted, even if he is deprived of oblation, of melted butter, of sesame seed.[17]

In the comment on this verse, Abhinavagupta emphasizes the traditional etymology of the term for initiation, *dīkṣā*, which traces the word to the two roots *dā*, to give, and *kṣi*, to destroy:

> Therefore initiation is characterized by a giving and destroying and its essence is a condition of clear insight. The sesame seed, and so on, are there of no use whatsoever. So far, the sense is that for the one intent upon being entirely in the highest perfection, whose nature is the state of being liberated while still alive, except for the attainment of the seed of the Heart, there is nothing at all that is of any use.[18]

Initiation, as envisaged in the *PTlv*, centers upon the reception of the Heart-*mantra*. It destroys the bondage that keeps the *sādhaka* in ignorance as well as bestowing a clear insight into the nature of the transcendent Self. It is clear from this passage and others like it that the external ritualistic paraphernalia of initiation are of secondary importance in comparison to the central cognitive component centering on the *mantra*. In another verse of the *PT* the *mantra* is extolled as leading to perfection in all three periods of time:

> By means of that Heart certain possessors of the *mantra* have become perfected, some will become perfected, and some are presently leading others to perfection.[19]

In the comment to the next verse Abhinavagupta clarifies that the principal object of initiation is the destruction of doubt. This destruction opens the way to the cognition of "that which has one taste" (*ekarasa*):

> Here, what is to be perfected is only the attainment of that *mantra*, but neither vows nor formulas are of any useful assistance whatsoever. The only thing of any use here is the complete destruction of the disease of doubt, because doubt, the essence of which is uncertainty and error, is the principal obstacle to an absorption whose nature is the cognition of that which has one taste.[20]

The unified perception of all manifest reality as composed of Śiva and the destruction of the bonds resulting from finite differentiations are the goals of the process of initiation. A unified perception resulting from the destruction of the bonds of difference bestows on the disciple the status of a *yogin* and of a possessor of extraordinary powers:

> Whoever knows truly, even though he may not have seen the *maṇḍala*, is forever united with the extraordinary powers, he is a *yogin*, and he has been initiated.[21]

In the rich comment to this verse Abhinavagupta emphasizes the power of initiation. He responds to those who would uphold the primacy of ritual by initially agreeing with them, but he then undercuts their position by declaring the superiority of the *mantra*:

> The various ritual regulations which concern the sacrifice, this is what must be accomplished, but even if he is ignorant of these, he becomes one who knows what must be done because of the acquisition of the complete fruit of the *mantra*. He who does not know as rules the well established rituals of the other schools—Ordinary, Vedic, Śaiva, Left-Handed, Right-Handed, Kula, and so forth—he indeed here in the sacrifice becomes a knower of the ritual method because he

> knows the "method" of the Ultimate. With respect to the Ultimate, which is only consciousness, all other things are extraneous.[22]

Initiation, as we can gather from these passages, involves the acquisition of a type of knowledge. Here, however, knowledge does not refer to specific or isolated fragments of information. Initiation is not the transmission of any specific fact or technique. It is rather the transmission of the infinite Self. More precisely, it is the process by which the initiate gains access to a true knowledge of the Self that he already is. By means of initiation, the *sādhaka* is opened to the *nirvikalpa* condition of immediate perception of the unboundedness of Śiva. There is a sense in which he is 'infected' with the germ of infinity, with the 'seed', which will sprout into the acquisition of the state of enlightenment. This seed, which will ultimately grant him the freedom and spontaneity of an embodied Śiva, is transmitted to him in the highly charged and compressed form of the *mantra.*

Mantra

As taught in the *PTlv* it is clear that the principal purpose of the Heart-*mantra* is the attainment of the freedom of consciousness: the *mantra* is a means towards liberation. In the context of meditation, the *mantra* is instrumental in reaching the *nirvikalpa* condition, or in the vocabulary of the *Yoga-sūtra*, the *asaṃprajñāta samādhi.* However, in the attainment of this state, which is often called *nirbīja* (in which the 'seed' or *mantra* has disappeared) the *mantra*, as a specific thought-form, must be abandoned, or rather it slowly melts into the unconditional freedom of pure contentless consciousness.

The Heart-*mantra*, *SAUḤ*, is a *bīja.* This particular *bīja* may be found in various combinations with "meaningful" words (*namaḥ, śrī*, etc.). Modern scholars have exercised themselves as to the origin and classification of the various sorts of *mantra*-s.[23] The tradition itself does not ignore the problem of classifying the bewildering variety of *mantra*-s. One such classificatory attempt appears in the *PTlv*:

> For this reason, the *mātṛkā* is the source of all *mantra*-s. It is the cause which consists of an undivided self-referential consciousness; whether it be of *mantra*-s whose meaning is hidden, *bīja-mantra*-s, that is seed-syllables, or *piṇḍa-mantra*-s consisting of groups of syllables such as the *catuṣkala* or *navātma*, and which are determined by a male divinity which they express; or whether it be the *vidyā*-s, such as the garland-*mantra*-s, such as for example, the *mantra namaḥ-śivāya*, whose meaning is clearly known to all, and which are determined by a female divinity which they express.[24]

Here Abhinavagupta distinguishes between *mantra*-s whose meaning is hidden and those whose meaning is clearly known. He also distinguishes between *mantra*-s that express a male or a female divinity. The scheme is not without its problems, but it does demonstrate that the tradition itself was well aware of the need to rationalize and bring some sort of order to the proliferation of *mantra*-s.

The *bīja*-s as a class of *mantra*-s present an interesting problem of interpretation. Early scholars of the Indian tradition criticized these sounds as a kind of "senseless mumble-jumble of words."[25] Modern scholars have modified this view by tending to classify them as quite literally "non-sense" syllables.[26] This latter view is more in accord with the tradition's own view that, in terms of the structure of everyday language, these syllables are not assigned a conventional meaning. They are in a technical and non-pejorative way "non-sense" or meaningless syllables. To say this is not in any way to impugn the importance or religious significance of the *bīja*-s. Moreover, that certain of these syllables bear a close resemblance to Sanskrit verbal roots or words is not, for the tradition, particularly relevant. Toward the end of this chapter we shall examine several passages from the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition in which we find displayed a sophisticated method of analyzing the *bīja*-s. This method allows for the assignation of symbolic meaning to each of the phonemes that compose the *bīja-mantra* without thereby overburdening the *bīja* itself with a conventional signification that would negate its efficacy as an instrument for the attainment of *nirvikalpa.* We find that in this method the tradition itself gives an important line of investigation as to the structure and symbolic content of the *bīja*-s to which we should closely attend. In addition, the process of breaking the *bīja*-s down into component phonemes, each of which is assigned a symbolic name, allows authors to convey *mantra*-s in their texts without explicitly spelling them out. By generating a kind of mantric cryptogram, the tradition is able to conceal the exact *mantra* from those who do not know the equivalent phonemes for the symbolic names given in the texts. At the same time, the tradition is able to reveal, for those acquainted with the equivalences, a certain sequence of symbolic meanings out of which the *mantra* is structured without thereby assigning a conventional meaning to the *bīja* itself. The Heart-*mantra*, it will be seen, is conveyed in just this way in the tradition's texts.

Mantra Theory

A *mantra* is a unique piece of language that is transmitted from the *guru* to the disciple. In order to understand the rather peculiar nature of

this language-fragment it is necessary to understand the nature of the tantric conception of language.

The sophistication of the tantric treatises, especially the tantric works of Abhinavagupta, is such that they exhibit a great deal of self-consciousness about the nature of the language and the use of language as a religious tool. By utilizing what may be termed a kind of phoneme mysticism, the Kaula lineage assigns a dense doctrinal baggage to these smallest of language units.

The non-dual Kashmir Shaivas view the process by which our daily reality is manifested from the infinite reality of Śiva as a 'sounding' forth. This uttering of reality, an emitting of reality, or even a vomiting of reality, takes place as part of the agency of the power of Śiva. This power is the *visarga-śakti*. Thus, the daily world we inhabit and the common-sense meanings of the language that we use to describe it are in some sense coextensive. This result mirrors the identity of Śiva with the supreme word, the *parā vāk*.

The details of this process of the sounding forth of reality are complex and would require an extensive survey.[27] Briefly, the process apparently occurs on four levels which correspond to the four levels of speech (*vāk*): *parā*, the supreme level; *paśyantī*, the first "vision" of what is to come; *madhyamā*, the intermediate stage; and *vaikharī*, the fully embodied stage of everyday speech. In this way, language, like reality, runs the full gamut from the level of supreme nonmanifestation, where we may speak more aptly of a silence that abounds in possibilities, down to the fragmented, divided, and conventional level of everyday expressions.

By inviting us to see and identify only small portions and artificially isolated pieces of the total reality, language creates the very condition of error, of incomplete perception (*apūrṇakhyāti*), that binds us in ignorance and suffering. On one level, language represents a large part of the "problem" of spiritual bondage.

Since language at its highest level is identical to the supreme reality, however, we may use that which binds us as a tool for awakening and liberation. On a technical level, the most potent tantric instrument for liberation is a small unit of language, the *mantra*. The specific *mantra* taught by Abhinavagupta in the *PTlv*, *SAUḤ*, contains the *visarga* as its final and perhaps most potent element.

The mechanism by which the *mantra* accomplishes the task of enlightenment is explained in the following way: In terms of its consciousness, the individual soul (*aṇu*) is caught between the total inertia of a rock and the omniscience of Bhairava. We have seen that it is the function of the four sheaths (*kañcuka*-s) to suspend the *aṇu* in the middle, like the mythological character Triśaṅku.[28] The *PTlv* states:

> The Heart is the seed of the universe devoid of beginning and end, devoid of coming into being and destruction. Because it is a seed, it expands into the form of All, it moves incessantly to expansion. This Heart which moves in the midst of the lunar stations made up of time—of the All—is present in everything in the form of an undifferentiated self-referential consciousness. He should continually meditate on this seed of the Heart as having penetrated into his own Heart, into his consciousness, which is in the form of a lotus flower because it plays at expanding and contracting. He should meditate on this seed which, having entered into his consciousness, causes it to expand by bringing about the removal of the form of contraction. In this way there occurs the attainment of Bhairava in all its fullness.[29]

This continuous movement of expansion present in the very core of reality is the *visarga*. Naturally, the expansion is accompanied by a counter-balancing movement of contraction. The *visarga* is always conceived in polar, rhythmic terms. As we have seen, this dual nature accounts for its being termed the *Rudra*-dyad, the *Rudra-yāmala*. The *PTlv* continues:

> The initiated one knows this supreme knowledge whose characteristic is the Heart, and which is given by the divinities of Bhairava, who are within the Heart, and who bring an escape from the vibration of manifestation which leads to the obscuring of the Self, and are rather directed towards the supreme vibration which consists of an opening up of the Self. These same divinities destroy the chief bond which is the state of contraction.[30]

The vibration that leads to manifestation is, in terms of consciousness, the contractive aspect of the *visarga*, and the supreme vibration that discloses the self is the expansive aspect of the *visarga*. Abhinavagupta tells us that the purpose of the *mantra* is to cause consciousness to vibrate more quickly. He argues the efficacy of *bīja*-s as salvational instruments in these rather crucial verses in the *TĀ*:

> All the more reason that the group of seeds which, because they are independent of the constraints of convention, cause consciousness to vibrate thus constitute a valid means for the attainment of consciousness. Because of the nonexistence of meaning to be expressed, because they vibrate in consciousness in a way that is totally indifferent to the external reality, because they are self-illuminating, because they cause the extinction of the movement of the vital breath—for these reasons the group of seeds are completely full and self-sufficient.[31]

The operative phrase here is *samayāpekṣāṃ vinā*: the *bīja*-s as a group are without conventional meaning. It is precisely for this reason that they may serve as a method (*upāya*) for the attainment of consciousness. They cause consciousness to vibrate (*spandayanti*). Other features given by

Abhinavagupta emphasize the *bīja*-s lack of verbal meaning (*vācyābhāvād*), their independent vibration within consciousness (*udāsīnasaṃvitspandāt*), their self-sufficiency or self-illumination (*svadhamataḥ*), and their ability to cause the extinction of the movement of the vital breath (*prāṇollāsanirodhābhyāṃ*). This last characteristic is important in that it provokes the entrance into the central channel of the *suṣumṇā* with the resultant attainment of the *nirvikalpa* condition.

In terms of the *mantra*, the process involves harnessing the power that resides in consciousness and allowing the finite mind to vibrate more quickly, to expand and to reach the fast vibration that characterizes the state of Bhairava. The attainment of this state is synonymous with the condition of *jīvan-mukti*. It is in this way that Abhinavagupta explains the theoretical underpinnings of the *Śāmbhavopāya*. The method that relates to Śiva or to Śambhu (*Śāmbhava*) employs nothing else but the *visarga*, which can be understood as an impulse or power within the Heart. Once consciousness has been successfully doubled back upon itself, this power begins to operate and leads the *sādhaka* toward the Ultimate. When the *sādhaka* has reached this stage, he has become a *vīra*, a spiritual hero, who is able to unite with the Goddess. He is one who is able to surrender gracefully, completely, and effortlessly to that centripetal motion of the Heart, the gravitational pull of consciousness on itself, which plunges him back into the depths of the ocean of consciousness. At this point the *vīra* may, if he so desires, consolidate this unification with the inner Goddess in the context of the secret ritual known as the *kula-yāga*.

Finally, the *siddha* may find that the power and stability of his enlightened condition render him capable of serving as a vehicle for the expression of the sacred texts of the tradition, known as the *āgama*-s. The word *āgama* means "something that has come forth." These texts are usually considered to be anonymous, but not in the sense that they have come forth or come down to us from a remote, ancient, or unknown human source. The *āgama*-s come forth as pure expressions of the supreme level of speech, the *parā vāk*: they arrive by a graduated process of stepping down through several levels the fast vibration of the highest consciousness. This process is sometimes expressed by the tradition in the notion that there are usually several versions of an *āgama*, each successively shorter, more compressed, and more accessible to human understanding.[32] The *siddha* or *siddha*-s who served as vehicles for the manifestation of these texts did not consider themselves to be the authors of the texts. Rather, they served as relay stations for the transmission of the Ultimate truth. The texts simply make available in the form of understandable language the truths and totalities of the Ultimate. Hence, the texts are seen by the tradition as representing the pure essence of the Ultimate manifested and expanded into language.

The Emissional Power in the Heart responsible for this manifestation is hypostatized as the supreme *guru* who teaches the particular yogic and tantric methods found in the texts.[33] Specifically, the teacher in the Heart functions as the source for the especially powerful and important religious instruments that are the *mantra*-s. While on one level language may be the source of error, at another, it is the source and expression of enlightenment.

We will now turn to an examination of the nature of the Heart *mantra* itself in more detail.

The Heart as Mantra

The first description of the Heart-*mantra* in the *PTlv* occurs in a kind of cryptographic form. The *mantra* itself is not spelled out. Rather, code terms for the specific phonemes that compose the *bīja* are set forth and it is left to the reader to piece the *mantra* together. Let us see how this functions:

> O beautiful one, the Heart of the Self of Bhairava is the third *brahman*. It is united, O fair hipped one, with the fourteenth phoneme, and it is followed by the last of the master of the lunar stations. (*S-AU-Ḥ*)
> (*commentary:*)
> The third *brahman* (*S*), whose nature is the Sadāśiva principle, and whose essence is the light of Aghora, is characterized by the entire group of knowable objects, in a condition in which their "objectivity" has not yet become clear, which is to say, the totality in the form of Being (*sad*). This third *brahman* is continually fused, connected with the fourteenth vowel (*AU*), as well as reposing, that is, being inseparably connected with, that which is the end, in the sense of ultimate basis, of the lords of the stations, of the fifteen vowels, reposing, that is, on the *visarga* (*Ḥ*). This is the Heart of the essence of the Self of Bhairava, that is to say, of the blessed group of sounds which has the totality as its body.[34]

The clues given in the *PT* verse as well as in Abhinavagupta's commentary are sufficiently obscure that it is conceivable that a reader who was not alerted to the fact that this verse is spelling out a *mantra* might miss it altogether. In the Sanskrit the verse is even more opaque than the above translation might suggest. All that the *PT* verse gives as clues are (in this order): "the fourteenth," "the Lord of the lunar stations," and "the third *brahman*." It is Abhinavagupta who specifies in the commentary that "the fourteenth" refers to the vowels (*svara*), and that "the Lord of the lunar stations" is the *visarga* that goes at the end of the *mantra*. The most difficult reference is to the "third *brahman*." Abhinavagupta links it to the *Sadāśiva* principle, and to the notion of Being (*sad*). However, if we

did not know that the pentad of *brahman* refers to the five phonemes at the end of the Sanskrit alphabet, namely, *Ś, Ṣ, S, H, and KṢ,* we would be completely at a loss as to the interpretation of the term "third *brahman.*" Abhinavagupta has explained the concept of the *brahma-pañcaka* in the comment to the previous verse when he lays out the *aparā visarga-śakti*, but he is silent about it in the comment to this verse.

We receive confirmation that the *mantra* conveyed in this verse has been correctly deciphered by the analysis of the *mantra* as presented in other passages. Abhinavagupta considers this *mantra* to be of sufficient importance to warrant repeating and amplifying his analysis of it in several different places. It will be helpful to examine several of these passages and attempt to understand the complex nesting of levels of meaning that occurs. In the *PTlv* Abhinavagupta devotes a long passage to the Heart-*mantra*:

> Just as when one abandons the manifest expansion of an earthenware jug, all that truly remains is clay. When the manifest form of clay is left behind, all that truly remains is an odor. When the specific form of the odor is not cognized, what truly remains is the 'I'. When such a distinction has been shattered, what remains is an essence formed of happiness, suffering, and error. When these three have been excised, there remain only the forms of the knower and the knowable. In the end, when even the distinction formed by subject and object has disappeared, all that remains is Being (*sad*). Even there, when the cognition of the three phonemes (of the word *sad*) has ceased, there ensues a repose in the first letter *S* alone. Then, this last repose in the phoneme *S*, is also the last repose of All—from the water principle to the *māyā* principle—of the entire range of knowable objects which appears in the midst of the impure path. At the moment of this last repose there appears the *brahman*, the All, one homogeneous mass, immortal, which has become the *ātman*. This is the last repose of *brahmavādin*-s—the followers of Vedānta.
> According to us, however, there occurs, beyond that, Bhairava, who manifests the entire universe by means of his activity of churning that state of repose. As it says in the *Bhagavad Gītā* (15.3):
>
>> My womb is the great *brahman* and in it I place the seed. From this derives the origin of all beings, O Bhārata!
>
> When, because of the disappearance of the distinction of its own-nature, the condition of repose in mere Being is no longer cognized, then Being appears to enter into a condition where it is absorbed into the powers of appearing light and self-referential consciousness. Because, in reality, that state of mere Being is not different from the true nature of such powers—what remains is the true nature of the power. That power is either will, action or knowledge, because nothing at all can appear without reposing on the power of such self-referential consciousness which is "I will," "I act," and "I know."

In the thought "I will" are intermixed the three powers—and in the same way in "I know," and "I act," because they are inseparably connected. Therefore, that which is becoming manifest appears as reposed in the own-nature which is composed of the triad of powers.

The true nature of this triad of powers is one, namely freedom, and because of this freedom, it is a true body made of two dots, formed of two knots, one above and one below, a body made of consciousness, whose nature is the supreme deity, Bhairava. The nature of these three phonemes is that they are composed of three states of repose, respectively, in the knowable object (*S*), in the process of knowning (*AU*) and in the knowing subject (*Ḥ*). Depending upon which state of repose one selects, the pronunciation extends as far as that phoneme alone. A threefold pronunciation therefore occurs. There are thus three types of perfection: enjoyment, enjoyment and liberation, and liberation.

When, in reference to an external object such as a pot, the place of repose is a single cognition, then the All, devoid of succession, in the form of Being is emitted, thrown into the Supreme Bhairava, by the power of the will, and that Being residing in the supreme Bhairava, nondifferent from it, by the same power of the will, is emitted outwards into the external world where it assumes the form of the "knowable" objects. This is the abiding in the Emission (*Ḥ*). The repose in the "Fourteenth" (*AU*) is the repose in the (three) powers because of contact with both, that is, now with knowable objects whose nature is the Being, and now with the knowing subject whose nature is the Supreme Bhairava. With the descent of the knower and the process of knowing Bhairava and the power (*Ḥ* and AU), the repose in *brahman* (*S*), that is, a state of undifferentiated identity with the "knowable object" occurs. The reality which unifies, which makes of one taste (*ekarasa*) this triangle characterized of three Emissions, one appeased, one aroused, and one that is both, and is thus made of three reposes—that reality is the supreme Emissional principle, and it is the consciousness, the Lord Bhairava himself.[35]

On one level, this passage may be used simply to confirm that the reading of the *mantra* as derived from the previous passage is correct. However, it is apparent that Abhinavagupta's intention in this passage encompasses much more than the secret embedding of a *mantra* into a text. This remarkable passage functions as an important theoretical justification for the specific phonemic composition of the *mantra*. The passage begins by describing the process of progressively stripping away the attributes and characteristics of any finite object until one is simply left with the sheer existential Is-ness of that object. Abhinavagupta identifies this residual pure Being with the *brahman/ātman* of the Vedānta.

Nevertheless, the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition considers it premature to stop short with this rather inert, if transcendent, Ultimate. Abhinavagupta argues that beyond the level of sheer Being resides Bhairava, seen here as *prakāśa-vimarśa*. Bhairava is never separated from his *śakti*,

so that beyond the level of sheer Being the supreme dyad of Bhairava and his power is to be found. One of the forms this power, the *śakti*, takes is the triad of powers, the *icchā*, *jñāna*, and *kriyā śakti*-s, which are identified with the trident, the fourteenth phoneme, *AU*.

Abhinavagupta continues by stating that the innermost nature of this triad of powers is the condition of freedom that they enjoy and represent. In turn this freedom manifests itself as the two dots, or knots, which are the *devanāgarī* representation for the *visarga*.

In this fashion, hidden in the fabric of a rather abstruse philosophical discussion, the Heart-*mantra* is spelled out: the Being, or rather the first letter of the word for Being, *sad*, gives *S*, which in the previous passage has also been called the third *brahman*. The argument about Being gives us the first phoneme of the *mantra*. Next, the allusion to the power of Śiva, and to the specific group of powers known as the trident (*triśūla*), gives us the vowel *AU*. This confirms the identification of the "fourteenth" given in the previous passage. Finally, the last phoneme is described as composed of two dots, a clear reference to the written form of the *visarga*. In addition, later on in the passage, explicit reference is made to the *visarga*.

An additional bonus derived from this passage is that the order of the phonemes composing the *mantra* is confirmed. Finally, the last portion of the passage gives the *mantra* backward. Starting with the *visarga*, it then gives the *triśūla*, and culminates in the Being, now identified with the unifying reality that makes everything "of one taste" (*ekarasa*).

Kṣemarāja paraphrases this entire passage in his *Parā-prāveśikā*, and adds a few interesting details of his own. The most important confirmation that we gain from Kṣemarāja lies in the fact that he deliberately names, in various places, but in proper order, the three phonemes that make up the *mantra* (*sakāra, aukāra, visarjanīya*), although he does not go as far as to write the *mantra* out.

> Thus says the eternal tradition which holds that this world is within the seed of the Heart formed of the supreme noble lady. How?
> Just as the true nature of pots and vessels and so on made of clay is nothing but clay, and just as the nature which is in the various kinds of fluids such as water is the same liquid element, so when the true nature of all principles, beginning with earth and ending with *māyā*, is being considered, we find that they are nothing but Being (*sad*).
> With respect to that word *sad* which is formed merely of the uninflected word, if we eliminate the portion of the suffix which makes clear the meaning of the stem word under consideration, what remains is only the phoneme *S*. This is the essential reality of the thirty-one principles and is hidden within them. Then come the principles (*tattva*) of *Śuddhavidyā*, *Īśvara*, and *Sadāśiva*, whose essence are the energies of knowledge and action. Because of the predominance

> of energy, these principles are contained in that which is composed of the energy of the Supreme, and we thus arrive at the phoneme *AU*. The phoneme *Ḥ*, the *visarjanīya*, then occurs in the form of the manifestation which is both above and below.
>
> The essential nature of this Heart-seed thus constituted is the Supreme Śiva, who is both transcendent of all and yet immanent within the universe. This is because it is the place of repose of all and that from which all arises, and its nature is the supreme *mantra* (*AHAM*). He who truly knows such a seed-*mantra* and is absorbed in it, he is initiated into the highest reality and, without abandoning his life, continues to exist like the ordinary man. When the body drops off, he indeed becomes the venerable supreme Lord.[36]

It is not necessary to repeat the analysis of the spelling out of the *mantra*. Interestingly, Kṣemarāja reinforces the connection between the Heart-*mantra* and the so-called supreme *mantra* (*Mahāmantra*), as well as repeating the claim that the Heart-*mantra* is the essential instrument for the attainment of *jīvan-mukti*.

In the following passage from the *TĀ* we find that there are two *mantra*-s that may be termed Heart-*mantra*-s:

> For that Being (*sad*, *S*) is termed the root of *brahman*, and the egg of *māyā*, but it cannot be called Being if it does not ascend into will, knowledge, and action (*AU*). Just as it is emitted (*Ḥ*) into the Bhairava consciousness because of an ascending into the three powers, in like manner, it is emitted externally as well. Thus this Being, which is the nature of all beings, is thrown together by the supreme consciousness with the triad of powers and the Emission, and in this way it exists.
>
> That Being which at first has an external form is then dissolved in the fire of awakening (*R*). What remains as a residue is simply a cognition which is an internal sounding (*Ph*).
>
> Then it attains an ethereal state (*Kh*), and because it abides in the triad of powers (*e*), it goes to the condition whose nature is the pure knower (*Ṃ*) and finally it is absorbed into that whose essence is absorption. This *mantra* is known as the "Heart of Reabsorption" and the prior is known as the "Heart of Emission."
>
> In the pure and natural cognition of the form of this *mantra*, the 'I' itself is manifested, thus say the ancient masters. This is the very essence of illumination of light.
>
> This 'I' is the force of all *mantra*-s whose nature is the Heart. Without this force they would be as if inert, like living beings without a heart.[37]

Once again, the first two parts of this passage give the *mantra SAUḤ*, called the "Heart of Emission." Next, the spelling out of another *mantra*, which is termed the "Heart of Reabsorption" as well as the "Master of the Mass" (*piṇḍanātha*) occurs. This *mantra* is reconstructed as *KhPhREṂ*. In his

comment Jayaratha supplies clues as follows: the "fire of awakening" is the phoneme *R* (*repha*). The "internal sounding" is the crooked consonant (*kuṭavarṇa*), also known as the flowery (*phulla*), namely, the phoneme *Ph*. The "ethereal state" is the void (*kha*), that is, the phoneme *Kh*. The "triad of powers" is here not the trident, as above, but rather the *yonibīja*, that is, the vowel *E*. Finally, the pure knower is the *bindu*, the phoneme *Ṃ*. In this order the *mantra* would be *RPhKhEṂ*. According to Jayaratha, this is the ideal order (*saṃvitkrama*) of a *mantra* variously known as the *Mātṛsadbhāva*, *Kālakarṣiṇī*, *Piṇḍanātha*, or *Pañcapiṇḍanātha*. Jayaratha suggests another way of describing this *mantra* in its ordinary order of phonemes: it is composed of the second phonemes of the second (velar), sixth (labial), and seventh (semivowel) classes of the Sanskrit alphabet. The second phonemes of these classes (if we count the vowels separately as a first class) are the phonemes *Kh*, *Ph*, *R*. To these are then added the *yoni*, *E*, and the *bindu*, *Ṃ*.[38] Hence the *mantra KhPhREṂ*. Once again, as in the previous passage from Kṣemarāja, Abhinavagupta stresses the link of this *mantra* to the 'I', as it is in the following spelling out of the *mantra* also from the *TĀ*:

> In the supreme Heart, where the great root, *S*, the trident, *AU*, and the Emissional Power, *Ḥ*, have come to be unified, here the *yogin* attains repose by means of the method of fulfilling himself with all things.
> The repose in this condition consists of an absorption into all, precisely by this achievement of fulfillment. The 'I' may be cognized precisely when the light finds repose in the Self.
> In the self-referential state of the Supreme which is devoid in the beginning of all activity, the first light that shines forth is that of the 'I', composed of pure consciousness.[39]

The following passage spells out the two Heart-*mantra*-s once again, and then gives a different *mantra*, which is linked with a graphic description of the *mantra* flaming in the Heart:

> The first consciousness of the first moment of consciousness of pleasure (*sukha*), of the sounds of love (*sītkāra*), of Being (*sad*), of perfection (*samyak*), and of equalization (*sāmya*), these are in effect the moments of contact (*sparśa*) with the consciousness of the Ultimate. The penetration into the three abodes of the heart, throat, and lips, into that which manifests itself greatly, is the fourteenth (phoneme) which appears as united (with the preceding phoneme). The one who is intent on the recitation then pronounces the *visarga*, and leads both paths, that of sounding and that of appeasement, into union with the Heart. This seed causes a movement within the central vein of bliss which, beginning with the bulb, passes up through the heart, the throat, the palate, to the summit of the *kuṇḍalinī*, and thence to the extreme end.

> The seed of reabsorption is as follows: the ether (*KH*) stands in the Heart, the flowery (*Ph*) is a labial, the fire (*R*) is a cerebral, the triangular (*E*) is palato-guttural, and the *bindu* (*Ṃ*) resides in the higher sphere. The awakened one who employs this method and is wholly devoted to the recitation of the phonemes without long delay penetrates into the abode of the Supreme, he the wise one. According to certain texts, for example, the *Dīkṣottara-tantra*, the word *varṇa* refers to colors, blue and so on. He who remembers in his own Heart the reabsorption (*Kṣ*), the man (*M*), the fire (*R*), and the wind (*Y*), united with the *Rudra* (*U*), and the *bindu* (*Ṃ*), sees at the end of seven days the goal of his practice. This is a fire which, awakened by this seed, flames violently in the lotus of his Heart, like a flame made variegated by sparks of different colors—blue, yellow, red—which surround it. The *bindu* shines flaming like a flame, just like the sun without clouds.
>
> By this self which shines of its own accord, the practitioner whose mind is well-concentrated attains a state of identity with Śiva, just like copper that has been pierced by mercury becomes gold.[40]

This intriguing description adds the *mantra KṣMRYUṂ* to the two Heart-*mantra*-s. The passage is based on the two possible meanings of the word *varṇa*, which is usually interpreted to mean phoneme. It is clear that the authors of the *tantra* quoted by Abhinavagupta wished to link the denotation of color to the phonemes in order to emphasize the vividness of the experience of the entrance into the fire that rages in the Heart. The passage is also interesting because of its comparison of the process of attainment of identity with Śiva to the alchemical transformation of copper into gold. There are hints throughout Abhinavagupta's texts that he was well acquainted with the ancient traditions of Indian alchemy, as well as with the deeper interpretations of the alchemical symbolism in terms of the attainment of immortal consciousness. One such passage will be examined in the final chapter, which will explore the experience of the attainment of the Heart.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion: The Heart Attained

We began this investigation into the Heart with the notion of "experiential replication," for the entire emphasis of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition is on the actual experience of the Heart of Śiva. This experience has many components. Perhaps most importantly, it completely restructures the inner experience of self-identity. As doubt and limitation are removed from the finite self, the recognition of identity with the omnipresent Śiva occurs. As a corollary of this inner rediscovery of the true status of the Self, a radical transformation of the perception of the external world ensues. No longer do finite objects appear as separate and limited structures; rather, the silent and translucent consciousness out of which all things are composed surfaces and becomes visible as the true reality of perceived objects. The changes experienced by the *siddha* in recovering his true status as Śiva bring him the freedom that is Śiva's most important attribute. Freedom brings with it a blissfulness that increasingly overpowers and invades the *siddha*'s life. Abhinavagupta tells us:

> The essence of consciousness is freedom, and the essence of that is a mass of bliss. It is for this reason that ritual actions directed toward an attainment of a state of identity and absorption should be carried out employing elements that bring joy to the Heart.[1]

In this concluding chapter various aspects of the experience of the Heart will be examined. The notion of "experiential replication" and the

idea of *jīvan-mukti*, life-in-freedom, will lead us to several descriptive passages in Abhinavagupta's writings that convey some of the experiential content of the meditative entrance into the Heart. Many of these passages emphasize the notion of *ānanda*, bliss, especially the culminating conception, termed *jagadānanda*, universal bliss, which becomes the hallmark of the Kaula lineage.

In the first two *PT* verses the Goddess implores Bhairava to reveal to her the great secret of the power that abides in the Heart. In his commentary Abhinavagupta presents the view of the *pūrvapakṣin* who questions the necessity for any kind of revelation. The objection is based upon the ground that if it is agreed that the Self is already shining in the Heart of all beings, then there is no need for Bhairava to reveal it. Abhinavagupta responds to this objection by saying:

> True, but even though it shines there, it has not truly become a conscious apprehension. Without conscious apprehension, even if a thing exists, it is as if it did not exist, just like the leaves and grass and other things when riding in a chariot. The question is thus appropriate because contentment is not possible without a conscious realization. Contentment (*tṛpti*) is of two kinds. The first is effected by means of absorption (*samāveśa*) and consists of magical powers. The second is attained by reaching a condition of conscious heart-felt realization, and it is the state of being liberated while still alive.[2]

The operative phrase in this passage is "conscious apprehension" or "conscious realization," which translates the Sanskrit *hṛdayaṅgamībhūta*. This compound literally means "has become something that moves in the Heart."[3] It has also been rendered as "a condition of conscious heart-felt realization." The argument that Abhinavagupta puts forward seems to be that even though we agree that in the innermost recesses all beings are essentially constituted by and identical with Śiva, there remains a crucial difference between unconsciously being something and consciously taking possession of one's true status. In one case, the finite self, ignorant of its identity with Śiva, suffers bondage and limitation. In the other case, conscious realization of the true status of the perceiver generates a transformative and empowering effect.

The *sādhaka*'s recognition of his identity with Śiva is simply the experiential awakening to a preexisting condition. Consequently, from an ontological perspective, when freedom is gained nothing has really changed. What has always been continues to be. Yet, epistemologically, the awakening to a conscious realization of the true situation is powerfully liberating. Everything changes. Indeed, it is as a result of this heart-felt realization that the state of *jīvan-mukti* is said to arise.

It is important to emphasize that the "conscious realization" referred to

is not simply a process of assenting intellectually to or affirming belief in a religious doctrine. No doubt, comprehension and faith may constitute an important first step in the process of gaining liberation. Nevertheless, it should be clear that to "become something that moves in the Heart" cannot be reduced to "having an idea in the mind." The power which moves in the Heart is the *śakti*, the *spanda*. The process of conscious realization involves the awakening to and grasping of this innate power of the Ultimate. It is this power that increasingly overwhelms the finite self with the infinity of Śiva. Finally, the experience of realization matures sufficiently that the *sādhaka* may rightly utter the startling assertation, "I am Śiva" (*Śivo'ham*).

The Goddess pleads with Bhairava to relate the great secret so that she may obtain (*vrajāmi*) the 'I'. The choice of verbal root *vraj* is significant. It is this same root that occurs in the first verse of the *PT* in relation to the notion of moving-in-the-void (*khecarī*). Abhinavagupta glosses the notion of 'obtaining' in the following way:

> As soon as this means is known, *khecarī*—the power of consciousness—penetrates into the level of awakened consciousness, and obtains, goes, knows, the state of identity (*samatā*), the state of fullness of the Self, the state of non-dual, non-discursive awareness.[4]

The condition 'obtained' as a result of the revelatory transmission of knowledge by Bhairava is termed contentment (*tṛpti*). Contentment is said to be of two kinds. The first occurs as a result of absorption (*samāveśa*) and results in the attainment of magical powers (*vibhūti*). The second kind of contentment is brought about by the achievement of the condition of conscious heart-felt realization and results in the attainment of life-in-freedom. These two types of contentment are not mutually exclusive. They are rather the result of the two possible attitudes that the *sādhaka* may assume when entering into his *sādhanā*. The first attitude focuses on the achievement of a specific goal, on the enjoyment of a specific desire. As the *sādhaka*'s meditative absorption deepens he attains the extraordinary power that is necessary to fulfill that goal or desire. The second attitude involves the unswerving determination to attain complete freedom. In this case, the *sādhaka* bypasses the fulfillment of any specific goal and plunges completely into the Heart to attain freedom.

There does not seem to be any true contradiction between this division of contentment into two types and the statement that it is the practice of meditative absorption in the form of the three *upāya*-s that is responsible for the attainment of freedom. Ultimately, the statement that extraordinary powers are obtained by absorption does not contradict the idea that heart-felt realization also results from absorption. The difference seems to lie

in the intention that the *sādhaka* adopts at the beginning of his practice and the depth and completeness of the absorption he is able to attain. In any case, Abhinavagupta makes it clear that it is the *śakti* that is ultimately responsible for both kinds of contentment: the enjoyment of fulfilled desires (*bhukti*) and attainment of liberation (*mukti*):

> Reveal that power to me, lead me on the path of reflexive awareness, so that when that power is transformed into a firm cognition in my awareness, I may attain contentment of both kinds, enjoyment and liberation, a contentment whose nature is of the consciousness of all beings, that is, the 'I'.[5]

Abhinavagupta clarifies that this final form of contentment is related to the attainment of the Heart:

> He is united with this Heart as soon as this power has appeared before him. In fact, the state of liberation of one who is still alive, characterized by an absorption into the pair of the Śrī Bhairava, is precisely this attainment of the Heart. Because as soon as it appears, the Ultimate (*A*), which is formed of consciousness only, grants the highest *kaulika* perfection, which is precisely a state of liberation while one is still alive.[6]

The attainment of the Heart corresponds to the attainment of the liberating power of Śiva which grants freedom and unveils the Ultimate reality. This highest of religious goals is implied by the phrase "conscious realization." Abhinavagupta makes it abundantly clear that his entire purpose for writing texts is the clarification and facilitation of this final religious goal:

> The purpose of this text is the attainment of liberation while still living. The nature of this state of liberation is that it results from a profound absorption into the nondifferentiated essential form of Bhairava, which is identical with the perfect egoity, the astonishment of the Self. The living being now consists of the entire group of principles conceived as being in connection with totality. The differences that compose it are luminous with the play that bestows the fragrance of the Self. This liberation occurs because of the heart-felt realization of the innermost Self. Thus, the living being becomes the Lord of all conscious subjects; among all beings he is a fit recipient for the knowledge of the Supreme. This liberation occurs because grace has entered into him; he has received the supreme descent of energy.[7]

This remarkable statement of the purpose (*prayojana*) of the *PTv* describes the delightful unity-in-difference that characterizes life-in-freedom. The finite self attains liberation and thus experiences its particular portion of the whole as indissolubly united with the cosmic totality. The finite self expands to experience itself as the perfectly fulfilled egoity (*pūrṇāhantā*),

and in so doing comes to the experience of astonishment (*camatkāra*) inherent in this amazing transformation into the universal Self. The *sādhaka* truly comes to embody the cosmos. The capacity to experience finite objects is not lost; instead these objects are seen as "luminous with the play that bestows the fragrance of the Self." The astonishment of the experience involves not just the discovery that the Self is the true inner identity, but also the bewildering perception that this nondifferentiated Self is simultaneously lightly at play as a luminosity inherent in all external objects.

The primary instrument for the attainment of this condition of freedom is the *mantra*. Abhinavagupta declares this unequivocally:

> For one intent upon being entirely in the highest perfection, the nature of which is the state of being liberated while still alive, except for the attainment of the seed of the Heart, there is nothing at all that is of any use.[8]

The attainment of freedom is also termed the attainment of the condition of Bhairava, which as Abhinavagupta emphasizes, is to be attained in this very body:

> Completely, that is, he who remembers, cognizes the seed by the manner which has been described and will be described; he successfully accomplishes his goal, and becomes with this very body a vessel for all the extraordinary powers, as well as for the Supreme Bhairava.[9]

Abhinavagupta expands on the process of attainment of freedom through the proper remembrance of the *mantra*:

> Thus continuously remembering the seed-*mantra*, even in the midst of his daily affairs, then as a result of this practice of remembrance, the ritual of worship is duly performed. As a result of the great excellence which prevails in the *śāstra*-s, beginning with the other scientific treatises on the Kula and ending with the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava treatises, the state of liberation while still alive arises. Here the great entanglement of the sport of existence which is produced as a result of the astonishment experienced in one's own supreme consciousness, this great entanglement becomes filled with the great Lord, the blessed Bhairava. This state of liberation while still alive is a direct experience (*anubhava*). Remembrance in this case describes a direct perception which does not revolve around anything other than the perception of the Self. Even though the worshipper's heart has not been filled in its essential being with the power, the peculiar efficacy of the worship-method (*pūjāvidhi*) is such that the worshipper is able to remember perfectly the seed-*mantra*. He thus attains the potency of the *mantra* which is the reality known as the Heart. In this way he attains the highest degree of perfection. Thus, he obtains liberation while still alive. He attains the potency of the *mantra* whose nature is the Heart

> because of the efficacy of the method of worship, either by himself, because of his own superiority and difference, or because of the lotus flower of the clear and gracious speech of the Lord *guru*. This is the state of liberation while still alive. That in which everything shines, and which shines everywhere, O awakened ones, is the one, brilliant, quivering gleam, the Supreme Heart. That which is the abode of the origin of his own world, she-ass or mare, expanding and contracting at the same time, he rejoices in his own Heart. He should worship the vibrating Heart which appears as cosmic manifestation; thus the Heart should be worshipped in the heart, in the *suṣumṇā* passage where one will encounter the great bliss of the pair of Śiva and *śakti*. Wherever—while meditating, remembering, cognizing, or acting—he attains repose, there the Heart will shine brightly. Where there is this one supreme knowledge linked, however, to verbalization, the principles, those who enjoy the various worlds, Śiva and the gods, the mothers of bound souls, each participating in its own way in its essence—which is at once the supreme reality and yet linked to diversity—they all attain the consciousness which is at once supreme and diverse.[10]

In this passage Abhinavagupta argues that the various methods of ritual and worship can all be reduced to the proper remembrance of the *mantra*. This remembrance becomes a continuous process, not in the sense that the practitioner (*upāsaka*) need mumble the *mantra* throughout all of his daily affairs, although this certainly became a widespread practice. Rather, remembrance here means the attainment of a condition in which the Self is continuously directly experienced (*anubhava*), even in the midst of one's daily affairs. It is a direct perception of that which is not different from the perceiver. This is the definition of *jīvan-mukti*.

The "great entanglement of the sport of existence" arises as part of the astonishment experienced in the supreme consciousness, an astonishment, in this case, that there should be anything at all different from the infinite Self. This great entanglement is filled up with the Bhairava, with the directly experienced perception of the Self as the all-pervasive reality both internally and externally. Abhinavagupta then links the Heart-*mantra*, the potency of the *mantra*, and the Ultimate reality of the Heart. He describes the vibrating Heart as the origin of the world, as shining everywhere, and as especially to be experienced in the central *suṣumṇā* vein. Here the *sādhaka* will enter into the experience of the great bliss of the primordial couple, Śiva and *śakti*. Wherever and whenever one attains repose in the Heart, the reality of the Heart will shine brightly.

Again and again the emphasis is on direct experience of the reality of the Heart. One of the terms that is often encountered in this regard is the notion of "appropriation" (*svīkartavya*). Abhinavagupta says:

> This cognition of the Heart must be appropriated, made one's own, as a reality that is empty of differences, whose nature is that it appears all at once, devoid of time.[11]

The reality of the Heart must be personally experienced. It is not enough to be told about it or to attempt to imagine it. The practitioner must directly transform the field of experience from night into day:

> When the absorption into the Heart is maintained for four periods of forty-eight minutes, then the totality, whose nature is essentially light, attains the condition of day, and the contraction of the night of *māyā* is destroyed. Then the practitioner with this very body becomes omniscient like Bhairava.[12]

The night of *māyā* is the contraction that has given rise to the great entanglement. This night is to be dispelled by the expansive absorption into the reality of the Heart, which is essentially light. The gleaming light of the Heart activated by the practice of the *mantra* severs the knots of the Heart and true knowledge of the Self is attained. Once released, however, this light can in no way be held back: it is unconcealable and unbounded. It begins to spread out from the inner reality of the Heart and invades the entire structure of finiteness. When this happens it transforms the inertness of finitude into the vibrancy of life:

> This is the tetrad, the moon and its three parts, the Heart, which, being present and being reposed in one's own Heart whose form is a consciousness of the self, must be projected within oneself in order to obtain an absorption whose nature is that it appropriates the levels of mind, breath, and body. One should place the entire group (*kula*), consisting of the mind, breath, body and senses, so that its one essence is resting on that tetrad, with its inert character having been dissolved, whose principal part is the cognition of the form of that tetrad. Because of the expansion of its light, one will arrive at a state where the *kula* becomes light. In this way the absorption of the tetrad of the Emissional Power in the levels of body, breath, and so on has been shown.[13]

The *kula* becomes light. The opaque and limiting structure of body, breath, and senses is invaded by the light of the Heart. It is for this reason that the liberated one becomes a Śiva incarnate. Even the body and the activities of the senses are radically transformed.

In a long passage in the *PTlv*, Abhinavagupta describes in detail the successive experiences encountered by the practitioner engaging in meditative absorption:

> [*ślokas 11-16*:]
> When the *mantra* has been "pronounced," the entire great multitudes of *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s appear immediately before him, characterized by absorption in his own body. He who remembers during forty-eight minutes, sealed in the navel, in the *cumbaka*—kissing pose, such a man always binds in his own body the host of *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s. When asked, he can even tell about

past and future things. Pronouncing, that is, remembering, during a period of three hours, the form of the divinity which he desires to reach, without any doubt, he beholds before his very eyes that divinity, attracted by the powers of Rudra. Practicing remembrance for only two periods of three hours, he becomes one who resides in the ether. With three periods of three hours, all the Mothers, the powerful mistresses of *yoga*, the heroes, the Lords of the heroes, and the mighty troop of the Śākinī-s, all these, having arrived, impelled by Bhairava who gives the sign, grant the supreme perfection or whatever boon is desired.

[*commentary on 11-16*:]

It has been said that if the principle of consciousness obtains a state of being the Heart, then the condition of being free while still alive ensues. But, whenever a flowing form is produced by the condition of practice due to the heating of the vessel of awareness whose nature is the Heart, that flowing, by a regular absorption into the levels of body, mind, and breath, just like quicksilver penetrating into metal, negates the insentiency of breath and mind.[14]

Abhinavagupta begins his comment on these verses by summarizing the process by which freedom is attained. He then states that as the state of freedom matures an outward flowing from the Heart into the levels of body, mind, and breath occurs. In other words, freedom is first established in the deep cave of consciousness by the activation of the reality of the Heart. The process does not end there, however. Using an analogy from alchemy, that of quicksilver penetrating metal, he states that the vessel of consciousness becomes heated. The outward flowing of reality from the Heart then negates the insentiency of the finite structure of individuality. It is this actual physical transformation of the body/mind complex that is the precondition for the manifestation of the extraordinary capacities that are by-products of the practice of absorption:

Then, because of the practice of absorption into our own consciousness, even regardless of the disciplines of *yoga* taught in other texts, such as the mastery over the breath and subtle channels, the lower *kaulika* perfections consisting of magical powers are produced for him. When this seed is pronounced, that is, as soon as it is absorbed into the level of the vital breath, immediately the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s, whose bodies are the powers of knowledge and action respectively, appear before the one who pronounces the seed. How? By penetrating into his body. Indeed, his own body is penetrated by that vital breath which is merged with the form of the Heart, whose characteristic is a completely full knowledge and action. Even the body which is filled by the Heart is penetrated by the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s whose nature is, respectively, knowledge and action. Therefore, the basic principle of these supernatural powers is that they are governed by the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s.[15]

Abhinavagupta continues by saying that as part of the spontaneous by-product of the *sādhaka*'s absorption into the practice of the Heart-*mantra*, the lower *kaulika* perfections, consisting of certain extraordinary capacities, manifest themselves. He insists that these capacities will occur even without the practice of the specific techniques for mastery of the vital breath and the subtle channels that are prescribed in other texts as the requisite methods for the development of extraordinary capacities. Abhinavagupta argues that the forces governing these supernatural powers are the *mantra*-s and the *mudrā*-s. *Mudrā* may mean certain specific hand-gestures that are thought to channel and focus the vital energy. Abhinavagupta states in the *TĀ* that *mudrā*-s may involve the entire body, the hands, speech, and the mind. He further states that the most important *mudrā* is the *khecarī-mudrā*.[16] This statement is significant because it shows us that in a larger sense *mudrā* comes to mean the attainment of specific spiritual states. These states encompass the body, the hands, speech, and mind, and unite the entire personality in a specific gesture for channeling the vital power. In sum, extraordinary capacities manifest automatically as the body becomes penetrated by the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s.

Abhinavagupta continues to describe the experience that results as the time period dedicated to absorption is extended:

> If one practices such an absorption uninterruptedly during two periods of twenty-four minutes with mouth pursed as if to kiss, in the form of the hollow space formed by a crow's beak, tending to swallow—that is, to kiss—the entire external Being, depending on the mass of objects (and this gesture of the mouth will produce the enjoyment of an extrememly cold taste, whose nature is the *soma*-moon, and whose form is the condition of being [the phoneme *S*]) and "being sealed in the navel," that is, having as a limit the site of the navel by the practice of the absorption into the "full pot," then the entire assemblage of *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s are manfiested in his body, which is then as if ruled by them. Here the term *body* means as much the levels of speech and body proper, as well as the individual self, that is, the mind. Because he is thus penetrated by the powers of action and knowledge, whatsoever question is posed to him, and instantly past, present, and future, appear before him, all that according to truth.[17]

In this passage Abhinavagupta gives a series of technical yogic instructions relevant to a specific type of absorption: the "kissing" pose, sealed in the navel, absorption in the "full pot." These yogic details are difficult to interpret specifically. Their overall symbolism is clear enough, however. The practice of meditative absorption proceeds with the intention of devouring the entire external world and reabsorbing it back into the "full pot," the stomachlike matrix, the womblike structure that harbors within it the entire universe.

Once again, the first phoneme of the Heart-*mantra* comes into play (*sad, soma*, and by extension, *śītala*). The entire universe is reduced to its essential Being. This Being is experienced as producing a cold (*śītala*) taste (*rasa*) in the mouth. This is the immortal nectar-essence of all existence, the *soma*. The practitioner whose body has been penetrated by the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s, linked respectively to the power of knowledge and the power of action, and who has thus swallowed the entire manifest universe and reduced it to a cold tasting of the immortal essence, is then able to answer any question that is posed to him. He has attained a kind of omniscience. The text continues:

> When such a practice, consisting of absorption into the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s in their universal form, has become strong, if he extends it constantly in the midst of that practice to three hours without interruptions, shining simultaneously, of one taste, whatsoever divinity connected with a *mantra* or *mudrā* is placed in his Heart, then that divinity is brought near by the powers of Rudra, is drawn to him by the powers of Rudra, formed by the power which develops from his constant absorption; he sees it before his very eyes, in identity with his own body, because its form has been known.[18]

The intense power that develops from the constant practice of absorption allows the practitioner to draw to himself whatever divinity he desires. He experiences this divinity as residing in identity with his own body.

> Then even as he continues to appropriate these divinities into himself—if he does not abandon his absorption—then remaining continuously absorbed for two periods of three hours, he no longer perceives his own body, vital breath, and so forth, and beholds unveiled the entire mass of the form of consciousness. Then, if he remains in that state for two periods of three hours, all distinctions are completely destroyed and his own body becomes similar to that of someone else.[19]

The practitioner next loses his sense of separateness, of the boundaries usually established by the physical body, and the distinction between self and other. Once he has surpassed this distinction he is able to perceive whole hosts of divine beings:

> Moreover, when he does not abandon the practice of absorption even then, but abides constantly absorbed for three periods of three hours without interruption, then he will behold the Mothers, Brahmī and the others; the Yogeśvarī-s, Mistresses of Yoga; the Vīra-s, heroes perfected by the practice of the *cakra* and led by Aghora; and the Lords of the Heroes beginning with the nine-souled Deity. Also the Siddhas, whose powers are born of the practice of the *cakra*, appear. All these are endowed with the great power of Bhairava. Even the

groups of Śākinī-s, the divisions of the *śakti*-s, such as the various groups Khecarī-s, and so on, all are powerful by the power of Bhairava. All these bestow the state of freedom in this very body, the supreme perfection with regard to the path that extends from the "earth" to Śiva. Therefore, all these various divinities beginning with the Mothers are totally impelled by Bhairava, who gives the sign according to the agreed upon rules, the Lord who holds them in identity with his own nature as manifesting and revealing his own nature, and as dependent upon the wheel of Bhairava. For he whose vital breath and so on, are filled by that, by those divinities, he is the Lord of the wheel, and has become Bhairava Himself, and therefore they follow him, as it says in the verse, they arrive before him.[20]

This theophany, this vision of the celestial hosts, all of whom are ultimately led and controlled by Bhairava, signals the attainment of freedom. The celestial groups are under the leadership of Bhairava and do not appear to anyone who has not attained the condition of Bhairava. Consequently, their appearance before the practitioner marks him as a Lord of the *cakra*, a Lord of the wheel of divinities. Once this state has been attained any particular desire that remains in the heart of the practitioner will be granted by this wheel of divinities:

Now therefore, they are able to bestow whatsoever particular desire is held in our heart, whether it be from amongst the highest, middle, or lowest group of desires, such as a sword, an unguent, the highest of the underground regions, and so on.[21]

By placing the desire or intention on the level of these divinities who control the entire functioning of the universe, the practitioner sees that desire fulfilled. This level of powerful causality immediately manifests any thought into form.

Another remarkable description of the attainment of freedom occurs in the *MVv*:

When the yogin begins to expand the face or sphere of consciousness, all the channels of the senses flow into the inner circle (*cakra*). Then the channels of the senses forcibly expand with an expansion whose nature is the absence of the variety or differences of the objects of sense. The multiplicity of objects, such as blue, yellow, the relationship of subject and object, and so forth, begin at once to disappear because they are in a state of expectancy facing towards consciousness. At that very moment, by means of the *mudrā* which bestows direct experience and which he obtained from the tradition that stems from the very mouth of the *yoginī*, he seals the All. The *yogin* directly relaxes into the direct experience of Bhairava in the form of consciousness, the ruler of All. That yogin, filled with wonder attains knowledge of his own Self. The

> water-tank is empty even if it is joined with a quantity of water swelling up with various objects. The water which is found in the tank cannot pour forth from there elsewhere. It is incompetent to fill the tank even with continued exertion. But when, because of the liquid that results from the shower of rain which falls into the essence of the door of the inner portion, the tank is filled quite full, then the streams of water flow fully in all directions. Thus, because of the violent force of its own light, consciousness begins to manifest itself. If even for an instant the sense objects would all together turn to repose in consciousness, which illuminates all things as being nondifferent from itself, then *māyā* disappears and the plane of Bhairava shines forth brilliantly.[22]

Here Abhinavagupta describes the process by which the *yogin* expands the inner condition of consciousness by drawing in all of the sensory functions and concentrating them in the inner circle of awareness. Upon reaching this inner circle the sensory capacities expand due to the absence of external sense-objects. Abhinavagupta next describes the process of direct experience resulting from the *mudrā* which is received from the mouth of the *yoginī*. The notion of the *yoginīvaktra* is an ambiguous reference either to the Goddess of consciousness or to the sexual ritual of the Kaula, in which case the mouth of the *yoginī* is the vagina. Punning on the meaning of *mudrā* as seal, Abhinavagupta states that the *yogin* then seals the totality: he marks it with the direct apprehension (*sākṣād anubhava*) of Bhairava as the world-ruler. Of even more importance is Abhinavagupta's use of the term *tandrita*, meaning relaxed, or released. The *yogin* lets go; he releases his tight grasp of the finite which has been maintained through the narrow channels of the sensory activity, but which is now released as a result of being free of objects and filled instead with Bhairava.

Abhinavagupta now embarks on an analogy using the imagery of water. He compares the process of diverting the senses away from their external objects toward Bhairava with the situation that occurs when a water tank has many streams flowing into it from all directions. These streams are the finite perceptions, which are incapable of filling the receptacle of consciousness no matter how hard they try. In addition, the water that lies in the tank, the finite consciousness before the process of introversion has taken place, is incapable of flowing outward from the tank; that is, the inner finite awareness cannot escape its bondage in the limiting structure of individuality. A shower of rain then occurs. The streams of sensory activity are channelled inward away from the objects of sense. The water tank overflows in all directions: the finite consciousness overflows with the stream of infinity that feeds into its innermost recesses. The analogy concludes with the statement that if even for a moment the objects of sense could be collected together to repose in consciousness, then these objects of sense would be reduced to a condition of non-difference with consciousness.

At this point the entire plane of *māyā* would simply disappear from view and Bhairava would brilliantly shine forth.

In a remarkable passage that begins with a consideration of the usefulness of ritual for those seeking freedom and ends with an ecstatic hymn of praise to the God and Goddess, Abhinavagupta extols the bliss which is the essence (*rasa*) that forms the proper offering in the ritual:

> In the case of the one who desires liberation, the ritual actions—whether they are numerous or few, depending upon the various elements employed in them such as substances, qualities, connections with time and place, brought about by external or imaginary means, but always causing joy in the Heart—these distinctions make no difference at all with respect to the final aim which is the attainment of the highest realization. For the different conditions of smallness or largeness are not admitted in *brahman*. The essence of consciousness is freedom and of that the essence is a mass of bliss. For this reason the ritual action that is directed towards the attainment of absorption and concentration in consciousness should always be accomplished by means of elements that give joy to the Heart. The wise one in order to worship properly should offer back into the highest abode that essence (*rasa*) which flows and trickles from the multitude of existing things because they are heavy with their nondifference with Śiva. This idea has been taught by me many times in my devotional verses in the appropriate sections. Reposing on the light which emanates from the absolute reality, those who know the secret mystery worship you with the vision of the supreme nectar which shines forth radiantly. In the divine abode of the body, I adore you, O God together with the Goddess, day and night. I adore you continuously washing with the sprinklings of the essence of my astonishment the support of all that has been made. I adore you with the spiritual flowers of the innate being; I adore you with the priceless goblet of the Heart which is full of the ambrosia of bliss. This triple world, full of various tastes and flavors, is cast into the apparatus of the nexus of the Heart. I squeeze it, casting it down from on high with the great weight of the spiritual discrimination. The supreme nectar of consciousness, which removes birth, old age and death, flows gushing from it. Opening the mouth wide I devour it, the supreme oblation, like clarified butter, and in this way, O Supreme Goddess, I gladden and satisfy you day and night.[23]

Ritual has an important place in the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. The *TĀ* describes and refers to numerous types of ritual. However, from the point of view of those desirous of liberation, as opposed to the perspective of those desiring the fruition of specific desires, the precision of the regulations established for the performance of ritual lose their importance. The only important element in this case is that every aspect of ritual be such that it causes joy in the Heart. If this is done, then the ritual will be useful as an accessory in preparing the mind and spirit for the practice of

absorption and the attainment of concentration. The method of worship (*pūjāvidhi*) prepares those who have not yet received the total *śaktipāta* to use the *mantra* successfully.[24] Abhinavagupta describes the essential aspect of worship as a rendering back to Śiva of the essence (*rasa*) that flows from all things. Extracting this blissful concentrate from reality, one offers it back to the highest abode as the only truly worthwhile gift that can be rendered to Śiva.

Abhinavagupta expresses this same idea in a series of powerfully evocative verses. These are among the most fervent expressions to be found in the *TĀ*. In them we find a description of the continuous process of worship that constitutes the constant experience of life-in-freedom. The dominant image is that of the *rasa*, the essence of all things, which is composed of bliss and astonishment and which bestows immortality through the nectar of supreme consciousness.

In a related image Abhinavagupta describes the process of rendering reality down to this essential form as a violent process of digestion:

> This condition which transcends the limitations is, according to the understanding of the teachers, of two sorts—either because of the nonmanifestation of the limitations or as a result of their having disappeared into cessation. This disappearance is itself of two kinds: the first is a peaceful, tranquil cessation and the second occurs as a result of a violent digestion. This violent digestion is characterized by a taste for devouring all and by a fire that is continuously flaming. The disappearance obtained by this violent digestion, which is indeed the third kind, consumes by fire the kindling wood of differentiation and is thus a subject worthy of being taught. All existing things hurled forcibly into the fire that rages in the stomach of one's own consciousness abandon all differentiation and feed the fire with the fuel of its own power. When the finite form of all things is dissolved by this violent digestion, then the All, which feeds and sustains the divinities of consciousness, becomes the ambrosia of immortality. These divinities, once satisfied, hold the Bhairava, who is totally full, the sky of consciousness, the God who reposes in the Heart and not elsewhere, this Bhairava they hold in identity with themselves.[25]

The notion of a violent digestion (*haṭhapāka*) once again emphasizes the physicality of the process of enlightenment. Just as there is a "fire" in the stomach that digests food and renders it useful and nourishing to the body, so also there is a flame at the center of the belly of all things, in the middle of the Heart, that violently consumes all differentiated objects. The result of this oblation is not destructive, but rather extractive. The cosmic digestive flame raging in the stomach of consciousness extracts the infinite essence from all finite things. The various divinities feed on this essence and thus fulfill Bhairava and reach identity with him.

In the following passage Abhinavagupta describes the condition of the realized being in more detail:

> For him who has ascended to such a natural Heart, whatsoever he does, whether it be breathing or thinking, all of that is considered to be religious *mantra* repetition (*japa*). Meditation (*dhyāna*), in the highest sense of the word, will be whatsoever he constructs, either internally or externally, by means of his own will, and by employing the essential nature of the Emission (*sṛṣṭi*). The abode of consciousness is at the same time formless and yet composed of all forms. Those who wish to attain a specific fruit do so by a constant meditation on a specific image and not just any image. Just as he who wishes to bring water near to himself even among the many things that occur nondifferently, removes all other images from before himself. He then ardently desires the pot for the purpose of obtaining the liquid. Because of the appearance in full vigor of the power of causality of the highest Lord, the specific image brings forth the specifically imagined fruit. He whose Heart is completely fulfilled and who does not desire any specific fruit, because of the absence of all limitations, before him the Goddess in her universal form appears. The *yogin* who stands in the Embodied Cosmos, quivering and vibrating because of an abundance of the highest juice of Bhairava, whatsoever bodily position he may adopt is considered a *mudrā*. Perpetually burning without any of the implements for lighting a flame, the top-knot flames violently within us, the violent flame that has issued forth from the stream of all the sensory capacities. The various objects of the senses entering such a fire of knowledge and causing the flame to increase, become a cause for the rite of oblation. The attainment composed in this way is indeed a dwelling in the very essence of the Supreme. This attainment leads to the Supreme, to the highest limit of fullness, and there is no further fruit beyond that which is higher. All the varied fruits imagined and desired by us are based on a state of nonfullness. Indeed, once genuine fullness has been attained, what other fruit would we desire? This is the method of sacrifice. If it becomes firmly rooted in one's heart, and the wheel of consciousness settles down, grows clear and bright, tranquil and placid, then very shortly one would be in one's last birth. He who develops firmly in this sacrifice attains unity (*kaivalya*), even though he is still beheld by the worldly ones because he remains bound by the activity of the body.[26]

The non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition does not neglect the human impulse toward the fulfillment of specific desires. In this passage, Abhinavagupta describes the method to be employed to draw out from the formless realm the specific form that is desired. At the same time, he enjoins his listeners to realize that desires arise in the mind because one has not yet arrived at a state of fulfillment. Once the practitioner has achieved the Supreme, which is the highest level of fullness, there is no room left for any more desire. To such a one the Goddess appears in her universal form. The fulfilled being leads a life of spontaneous religiosity and whatever action he may perform

is considered to be *japa*, whatever posture he assumes is considered to be a *mudrā*. The *yogin* abides at the level of pure causality: he stands within the *kula*, vibrating and quivering with the supreme "juice" (*parāsava*) of Bhairava. There have been other textual references to the notion of flames in the stomach and in the Heart, but here we read about the flame in the top-knot that burns using the various sense objects as fuel. This process is termed the method of sacrifice (*yāgavidhi*) and its practice tranquilizes the wheel of consciousness and leads to liberation.

In the final passage to be considered, Abhinavagupta first describes a process of meditation in which the familiar themes of the reduction of all to its essence and the discovery within the finite sense-objects of the infinite consciousness are once again employed. He then describes six stages of bliss yielded by a meditative practice for the realization of the Supreme. He attributes both of these practices to his teacher in the Kaula lineage, Śambhunātha.

> This supreme wheel goes out from the Heart through the spaces of the eyes, and so forth, and ranges over the various objects of the senses. Because of the wheel's rays of light, a form whose nature is of the light of the moon, sun, and fire is established in those objects by regular degrees in conjunction with manifestation, maintenance, and dissolution. In this way, as this wheel falls on the various objects of the senses (such as sound) by way of the sense-capacity openings, one should recognize that sensory object as identical with the wheel. Thus, wherever the universal wheel falls, by this methodical practice it falls in its entirety like the universal monarch. In this way, the whole multitude of paths is effortlessly dissolved in the great wheel of Bhairava which is contained in consciousness. Then—even when all this has come to an end and all that is left are latent impressions—one should meditate on the great wheel which revolves and is the overflowing of the true Self. Because of the dissolution of all that could be burned, and because of the destruction of even the remaining latent impressions, the practitioner should meditate on that wheel as becoming calm, then as pacified, then as tranquil quietude itself. By this method of meditation, the entire universe is dissolved in the wheel, in that consciousness. Consciousness then shines alone, free of objects. Then, because of the essential nature of consciousness, manifestation occurs once again. That consciousness is the great Goddess. Continually causing the universe to become absorbed in his own consciousness, and continually emitting it again, the practitioner would become the perpetual Bhairava. The *yogin* should meditate on the wheel with three rays or spokes, then on one with four, with five, with fifty, sixty-four, one hundred, or one thousand. He should meditate with an undistracted mind on the wheel with innumerable thousands of rays. There is no limitation at all to the universal power of the great Lord, the great God, the Lord of consciousness, whose consciousness is always trembling and shining brilliantly. For his powers are the entire world and the great Lord is the possessor

> of those powers. This is what Śrī Kaṇṭha has stated in the *Māṅgala Śāstra.* This is the first method, the method of meditation taught to me by Śambhunātha when I had pleased him, and it was taught to him by Sumati. These hints will be useful in practicing the other meditations as well, which without succession may be placed among the highest methods that lead to the Supreme. Now, as has been seen, the activities of the vital breath are the rising breath and so on. We will now describe how the Supreme may be unfolded when one employs the vital breath. At first abiding in the Heart, due to a repose in the mere emptiness, in the portion of the knower alone, in the innate bliss, he experiences a state known as "devoid of bliss." Then, when the vital breath rises, he experiences in the "knowable object" the bliss that arises from another. In this condition of the bliss that arises from another, he abides at ease in the *apāna*, which is filled with the infinite portions of the knowable, and he is embellished with the moon of the *apāna.* Having attained the level of the *samāna*, he abides wholly absorbed in the unification of the infinite rays of the knowable objects. He becomes one who is composed of the bliss of *brahman.* He is totally dedicated to devouring the limiting forces of the streams of the knowable objects and the means of knowing; he reposes in the fire of the *udāna* and comes to know the great bliss. Then, having entered this repose, and when the great flames begin to abate, the great pervasion which is beyond all qualifications ensues, and this is called the *vyāna*, the unlimited. Then, indeed, the bliss of consciousness occurs which is not strengthened by what is inert. For here indeed there is no possibility whatsoever of a difference which would be formed of the insentient. That is a state where there is no distinction, where everything appears shining on all sides, where consciousness is unstruck, and fed by the supreme nectar. There one does not meet with any "realizations" in the proper sense of the word at all. This condition taught to me by Śambhunātha is known as the universal bliss. The repose in this state may be obtained by employing the pronunciation of the Heart. The complete repose in this state corresponds to the attainment of the condition of the Supreme. These are the six states which arise from the ascension of the vital breath into our different internal abodes, even if in essence our essential nature, flowing out of the Heart, is always one.[27]

Abhinavagupta begins by describing the process by which the wheel of supreme consciousness emerges from the body through the openings established for the sense-capacities. As the meditative practice advances, the *sādhaka* begins to recognize that the objects of sense that he encounters are identical with the wheel of supreme consciousness. Like the universal monarch who travels with his entire entourage wherever he goes, supreme consciousness cannot be subdivided. As it emerges through the senses in its totality it cognizes its own totality as present within the objects of the senses. In this way the dissolution of all apparently separate and finite objects in the great wheel of Bhairava occurs. The practitioner persists in his practice, however, and dissolves even the residues, the latent impressions of experience. The wheel of consciousness is thus purified, calmed, and brought to

a complete state of quietude. At this point, he will experience contentless consciousness devoid of any objects whatsoever. As we have seen before, the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition does not want to stop at this stage. It considers that level of completely contentless consciousness as being the great Goddess. From her, manifestation inevitably occurs once again. In this way the *sādhaka* rehearses within himself the powers of Bhairava that encompass the repeated and cyclical process of manifestation, maintenance, and dissolution of the universe.

In the second meditation Abhinavagupta focuses on the activity of the vital breath as a means for obtaining the Supreme and he describes the levels of bliss attained as the awareness comes to repose on the different level of the vital breath. These can be summarized as follows: beginning with the innate bliss (*nijānanda*), he experiences a state devoid of bliss (*nirānanda*) that results from a repose in the emptiness in the Heart that arises when the knower is alone. Five other levels of bliss then ensue: *parānanda*, the bliss that arises from another, occurs when he experiences the infinite aspect of the knowable objects. It is linked to an abiding in the vital breath known as *apāna*. *Brahmānanda*, the bliss of *brahman*, results from the experience of the unification of the infinite rays of objects. It is linked with the vital breath *samāna*. *Mahānanda*, the great bliss, arises as the practitioner devours the limited aspect of all knowable objects. It is linked with the *udāna* vital breath. *Cidānanda*, the bliss of consciousness, arises in the great pervasion (*mahāvyāpti*) that results as all limiting qualities are transcended. It is linked to *vyāna*. Finally, the universal bliss, *jagadānanda*, which is beyond any type of realization, occurs. Here the universality of supreme consciousness is experienced. This state of being is fed by the supreme nectar (*parāmṛta*). This condition, described by Abhinavagupta as the highest abode, the Heart, is to be attained by one of five methods: by stirring up the power of consciousness (*śākta kṣobha*); by penetrating into the Embodied Cosmos (*kulāveśa*); by going within at any of the end-points of the subtle channels (*sarvanāḍyagragocara*); by pervasion (*vyāpti*); and by the contraction of everything into oneself (*sarvātmasaṃkoca*). These five methods summarize the various meditation techniques we have been considering in this chapter. Says Abhinavagupta:

> He who abides one-pointedly attending to the vibration that dwells in the two channels of bliss, attains that nectar-like level from which the Emission flows. The wise one may enter the Heart in the agitation of the power, in the entrance into the *kula*, in the region of the beginning of all the energy channels, in the pervasion and in the contraction of all into himself. As a result of the mutual rubbing of the collection of finite energies of the sun and moon, the bliss of Emission shines forth in the central abode whose nature is the fire and the moon. But enough telling of secret things! The Heart of the *yoginī* is hidden

by its very nature. The wise one who reposes there would be one who has attained his purpose.[28]

Concluding Remarks

Even at the end of this long journey through Abhinavagupta's thought, it is clear that we have barely touched the surface of this rich tradition. The purpose of this study will have been served, however, if any reader of the translation of the *PTlv* presented in the appendix finds in these pages an orientation and a guide to the religious vision presented in that text. The *PTlv*, like all of Abhinavagupta's works, compresses within it an entire worldview that must be made accessible for the text to be understood. We will judge this study to be successful if the concepts and explanations presented in these pages open up that worldview to the reader. The focus of the study has been the symbol of the Heart. In a sense, like all religious symbols, it still eludes precise definition. The Heart speaks for the depth and density of the Ultimate reality that the tradition desired to attain and teach. While the deeper resonances of the Heart await direct experience, it has been possible to present here the major concepts that are necessary for an understanding of the texts that deal with the Heart: the notion of the Supreme, the idea of the Embodied Cosmos, the force of the Emissional Power, the compression of this liberating power in the *mantra*, and the necessity for the direct apprehension of the Supreme. We have seen that the tradition teaches that there is an innate presence of the Supreme within the individual. This presence is the Heart, which is also the self-propelling, self-activating force that leads one to experience the freedom and bliss of the Ultimate, man's true nature.

In the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition there is found a complete expression of these truths, which are admittedly shared with many other religious traditions of India. The non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition represents, however, an important moment in the religious history of India. Synthesizing within itself all of the major streams that preceded it, it presents a particularly rich and dense formulation of the ancient wisdoms of India. Abhinavagupta stands as the architect of this synthesis. The central religious vision that unifies all of these streams of religious practice finds its most concrete expression in the Kaula lineage and the symbol of the Heart. The *PTlv*, which provides a textual focus for the study, functions as an initial window by which we may peer into this vision. Long quotations from other works by Abhinavagupta are included in order to complement the teachings he presents in the *PTlv*. The translation and study of other texts of the tradition will undoubtedly enrich our picture of this religious vision.

An examination of Abhinavagupta's tantric teachings is a crucial step toward establishing a proper understanding of Abhinavagupta's thought and, indeed, of the entire non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition. There is a sense in which the dimensions of religious experience and mystical praxis, so refined in Abhinavagupta's tantric formulations, are logically prior to the philosophical and speculative structures of, for example, the *Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-vimarśinī* and the *Dhvanyāloka-locana.* Yet it must not be assumed that the Tantra is more "primitive" or less sophisticated than the philosophical or aesthetic materials. Rather it should be seen as the "inner teaching" that is directed toward the enlightenment of disciples. Through this "inner teaching," Abhinavagupta reveals with great subtlety and fluidity the methods of enlightenment transmitted to him by his *guru*, Śambhunātha. The Kaula lineage, despite its use of sexual symbolism, addresses itself to the theme of consciousness. While the tradition is known for its secret ritual, it would be a serious mistake to interpret these elegant teachings about the inner workings of consciousness as simply sexual techniques. The seeker of liberation is directed by Abhinavagupta to the realm of his own powerful consciousness. The philosophical teachings logically follow as interpretation and explanation, and are more congealed, less fluid "outer teachings" that establish the position of the non-dual Kashmir Shaivas vis-à-vis all other *darśana*-s. It is extremely important to grapple with the tantric writings of Abhinavagupta, even if the ultimate goal is an understanding of his "philosophy," for it is in the tantric writings that he has revealed his central religious vision, the essential stance or approach to reality that pervades and informs the entire body of his writings.

APPENDIX

The Short Gloss on the Supreme The Queen of the Three Parātrīśikālaghuvṛttiḥ

written by the Eminent Teacher, the Great Lord Śrī Abhinavagupta

[*Introductory verses*]

1. Where all splendors are in the light
   And all darknesses in the dark
   brilliant light and gloomy darkness!
   I praise that transcendent light.

2. In the unbroken succession of *āgama*-s, true sacred scriptures,
   The Trika doctrine has been expounded in many ways.
   But the essence of the Tantra is here set forth in
   accord with the views of the great Utpaladeva.

3. Always new, hidden,
   Yet old and apparent to all,
   The Heart, the Ultimate
   Shines alone with the brilliance of the Supreme.

[*Introductory prose to śloka 1:*]

At this point the Goddess, who is our very Self in the process of awakening, reflects and questions her Self incessantly. Thus the text says:

"The blessed Goddess said."

What does she inquire about? That is stated in the following verses.

[*śloka 1:*]

O Lord, how can the Ultimate of its own accord grant the *kaulika* perfection?

1.) *by what means, as soon as known, does the khecarī*, Moving-in-the-Void, attain a condition of equality?
2.) by means of which, as soon as it is known, he would obtain the condition of equalization with the *khecarī*.

[*commentary on śloka 1:*]

O God, you are my own Self, always present from the beginning in knowledge and action, you alone are the Ultimate, the Superior, the Excellent, the Surpassing; and the Supreme is the conscious perceiver with respect to the insentient, the inert. However, that perceiver whose nature is consciousness and which is self-illuminating is not in turn perceived by another subject; thus it is termed Ultimate.

For this reason, the Ultimate, formed of consciousness, is always present everywhere, and is devoid of spatial or temporal dimensions, of prior and subsequent; it is undeniable and unconcealed. What then can be said of it?

This much indeed may be said of it:

How, in what way, does He, of his own accord, freely, "give," that is to say, produce, the manifestation, intelligible to both organs of sense and action, of the *kaulika*, produce the "perfection" of the *kaulika*, which is the sum total of the "group" (*kula*), consisting of the ever-new bodies, senses, worlds?

The verbal stem *da* (which can be understood as derivable from either the verbal root *dā*, in the sense of giving, or from the verbal root *das* in the sense of destroying) can mean "he emits" and "he reabsorbs."

Since the Ultimate (*anuttara*) is uniformly and only consciousness (*cit*), how can it appear as the differentiated forms of knowable object, process of knowing and knowing subject, which are always new and as such able to be discussed and examined? This is the meaning of the question.

[Objection:] But what is the use of that once it is known?

[Response:] As soon as this means is known, the *khecarī*—the power of Consciousness—penetrates into the level of awakened consciousness, and obtains, goes, knows, the state of identity (*samatā*), the state of fullness of the self, the state of non-dual, nondiscursive awareness.

When that means is not known, such a consciousness is not *khecarī* because it moves only in the portion called "knowable object" whose nature is unawakened. That consciousness is then restricted by knowable objects such as blue, and so on, and is thus not the full power of consciousness.

[Another interpretation of the *śloka* is now presented.]

Moreover, the spiritual perfections (*siddhi-s*) are obtained by the practice of the *yoga* of the vital breath, and so forth, by a series of practices such as concentration. How can the Ultimate, which is devoid of temporal succession and is only consciousness, grant the *kaulika* perfection, linked to temporal succession, by the mere knowing of which, one would obtain the nature of the Goddess?

[*śloka 2a:*]

Powerful Lord! My very Self! Tell me that mysterious secret, great, unconcealed.

[*commentary on śloka 2a:*]

This is preeminently secret, great, excellent, unconcealed because self-luminous. Therefore, O Lord, you who are accustomed to create by revealing and concealing your own nature, O Self, describe to me, to the consciousness that inquires, explain to me, that is, lead the course of your thoughts into a series of intelligible words.

[Objection:] But the subjective perceiver already appears shining in the Heart of all, therefore what is the point of the question?

[Response:] True, but even though it shines there, it has not truly become a conscious apprehension. Without conscious apprehension, even if a thing exists, it is as if it did not exist, just like the leaves and grass and other things when riding in a chariot. The question is thus appropriate because contentment is not possible without a conscious realization. Contentment (*tṛpti*) is of two kinds. The first is effected by means of absorption (*samāveśa*) and consists of magical powers. The second is attained by reaching a condition of conscious heart-felt realization, and it is the state of being liberated while still alive.

He will demonstrate precisely that in the next verses.

[*ślokas 2b-3a:*]

Reveal to me that power, which abides in the Heart, known as the *kaulinī*, the noble Lady of the "group."

O Lord of Gods, reveal to me that by means of which I may obtain satisfaction, the 'I'.

[*commentary on 2b-3a:*]

The power which resides in the Heart of consciousness is freedom itself. The purpose of its creative activity is the "group" (*kula*), the entire range of perceiving subject, perceived object, and process of perception. Thus it is called *kaulinī*—having to do with the group. She is the noble Lady of that constructed group, she rules over it. By knowing it, she causes its manifestation, as well as reabsorbing it in herself.

Reveal that power to me, lead me on the path of reflexive awareness, so that when that power is transformed into a firm cognition in my awareness, I may attain contentment of both kinds, enjoyment and liberation, a contentment whose nature is of the consciousness of all beings, that is, the 'I'. The two occurrences of *kathaya* are understood as being in the causative.

Thus, when consciousness is about to be awakened, she poses a question about the highest reality, which, though hidden, is becoming manifest. Then, when she has become full, has woken up, she turns into the divine Bhairava and she herself answers her own question.

Here there is never a question of temporal precedence between the two. The past tense is used because the past appears as a fictional distinction of time which creates the illusion of gradations in the ever remote past.

Because the nature of That is that it is a divine reality which cannot be directly perceived, the perfect tense is employed to speak about it.

[*śloka 3b-4:*]

The Lord Bhairava said:

Hear, O Goddess, O One of great fortune, about the higher than the highest and also about the highest.

I will describe to you the Ultimate so that no doubt remains, the Ultimate which grants the *kaulika* perfection.

That *kaulika* function, O Godess, abides in the great space of my Heart.

[*commentary on 3b-4:*]

You who when enlightened are greatly fortunate, and whose desire is to show yourself—hear—clearly understand. Because I will describe to you, who are thus enlightened, the nature of the Ultimate which is also the nature of the perceiver, and even of the Highest. (The word *api* includes in that the object of knowledge and the process of knowing, and so on.)

The Ultimate grants that *kaulika* perfection, that is to say, it manifests, and so on, everything, and has as its aim the contentment which consists of both enjoyment and emancipation. I will describe that Ultimate to you, which is to say, I will lead you to realize it directly in your Heart. In this way, as soon as you have succeeded in understanding, you will be free from doubt about this forever. (The pronoun *ayam* is employed to indicate that the *kaulika* function is apparent to all.) Indeed, that *kaulika* function resides in the ether of my Heart, where its nature is consciousness, and it is always known as being in the Heart.

As it says in the scripture (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2):

"O Friend, in the beginning this alone was . . . ," "One without a second," "Then he thought: 'May I be many'" and so on.

And then:

[*śloka 5:*]

All the vowels from *A* to *bindu* are the lunar stations, joined with time. The moon and the sun are said to be within these.

[*śloka 6:*]

O virtuous One, within the five classes of phonemes from *K* to *M* stand in order the twenty-five principles from "earth" to the "Self."

[*śloka 7:*]

Above that group of twenty-five is the tetrad of supports—namely the wind, fire, water and Indra.

Higher than that are the phonemes beginning with *Ś*, generally known as the pentad of *brahman*.

[*śloka 8-9a:*]

The process of manifestation whose root is *A* and whose end is *KṢA* has thus been declared. Its course is to be known. O beautiful One, this

is proclaimed in all the *tantra*-s as the womb of all the *mantra*-s, and of all the *vidyā*-s, the granter of All.

[*commentary on 5-9a:*]

It is well known that perception here is just the illumination of the objective world, which, by nature, is divided up into two groups, namely the knowing subjects and knowable objects. In this respect, the knowing subject has as its essence the supremely subtle vibration of the Self. The nature of the knowing subject is that it is characterized by knowledge and action, and its nature is one of contraction and expansion, that is, opening and closing. It is not like a pot, and so on, which is inert, limited and stationary. The more this combination of expansion and contraction becomes evident in the vibration of the Heart, of the triangle, the more does the subjectivity become elevated, until it reaches the consciousness of Bhairava. Conversely, the more the expansion and contraction diminish, the more does the subjectivity fall until it becomes inert like a stone. This expansion and contraction is the characteristic of the Emission (*visarga*), whose essence is freedom, that is, the very power of the Lord, of the Ultimate (*anuttara*). Therefore, the phoneme *Ḥ*, the *visarga*, is termed the *Rudra-yāmala*, the Rudra-Dyad, because it consists of both the Supreme Śiva and *śakti*, of the rest and activity which constitute the Union of Bhairava with his beloved.

In the center of this conjunction of expansion and contraction are to be found the Ultimate (*anuttara: A*), bliss (*ānanda: Ā*), will (*icchā: I*), domination (*īśanā: Ī*), opening (*unmeṣa: U*), and decrease (*ūnatā: Ū*). When in will (*I*) and domination (*Ī*), there is an appearance of objects at first very vague, and then more clearly, then the four phonemes *Ṛ, Ṝ, Ḷ, Ḹ* appear. From the union of will (*I*) and domination (*Ī*) with the Ultimate (*A*) and bliss (*Ā*), result the phonemes *E* and *AI*. Similarly, from the union of opening (*U*) and decrease (*Ū*) with the Ultimate (*A*) and bliss (*Ā*) result the phonemes *O* and *AU*. Thereupon, when that which appears as the knowable object is reduced to a residue of latent impressions, there appears the *bindu, Ṃ*, whose characteristic is that of being a knowing subject. By this means, the process of manifestation is completed and perfected. In this way, we have the Supreme Bhairava couple which consists of the energy of Emission which is formed of the completely full consciousness and bliss. In this respect, the Emissional state (*visarga: Ḥ*) is the universal form generically implicit in each of the fifteen different moments and thus it does not require separate consideration.

Thus, the *kaulika* function which is truly contained in my Heart, where it is identical with consciousness, now, that is, without interruption,

constantly, begins to spread by the power of the cognition of objectivity.

The vowels which begin with *A* and end with the *bindu* are called *tithi*, lunar stations, because they fill up the "stations" (*sthiti*) of the moon of awakened consciousness. In this way, the Emissional Power of the moon of enlightened consciousness, which is composed of bliss and light, that is, the Emissional Power of the Ultimate (*anuttara*), is filled by these fifteen stations.

These fifteen are called vowels (*svara*), because their nature is a sounding whose character results from the self-referral of consciousness, and because they shine by themselves (*svayaṃ rājantaḥ*). Thus with respect to the external world they are self-luminous.

Within them are the moon and sun, contraction and expansion. Within them as their nature is the *visarga*, which is made up of two dots (*bindu*).

The presence of the *visarga* in all the vowels is due to the fact that all the vowels are united with time (*kāla*)—here to be understood in the sense of the self-referential consciousness whose nature is to hold things together (*saṃkalana*). The self-referential consciousness is dynamically vibratory. It is not immobile, stationary, and inert.

Even in the external world, the sun and moon, which rule the day and night by their expansion and contraction, move within these fifteen stations.

She, the blessed One, is that highest power of Emission. This is the power of Emission in its highest form.

There now occurs the appearance of knowable objects, which takes place in will (*I*) and domination (*Ī*). As knowable objects begin to appear, begin to separate themselves, there occur, on the gross level, the five gross elements and, on the subtle level, the five subtle elements. This results in ten principles, namely: earth, water, fire, air, space, smell, taste, form, touch, and sound. This is the manifestation of the knowable objects.

At the same time, the sense capacities are being manifested as instruments of cognition. That is to say, the five action-capacities, namely: sexual, excretory, ambulatory, grasping, and speaking, in which the power of action predominates; and the five sense-capacities—smelling, tasting, seeing, touching, hearing—in which the power of cognition predominates.

Then, when by gradual degrees, the aspect of the "knowable objects" begins to diminish, the perceiving aspect begins to manifest itself, namely: mind, egoity, intellect, primordial materiality, and individual consciousness. Thus the principles beginning with "earth" and ending with "individual consciousness" correspond to the series of phonemes that runs from *K* to *M*. The individual consciousness, even though it is a limited perceiver, is here reckoned as belonging to the group of knowable objects. For without

it, who would perceive the objects of knowledge beginning with "earth"? Such is the nature of that which appears as the knowable objects.

The mass of knowable objects, without abandoning their state of being knowable objects, operate to unify the two different aspects: knowable object and limited knower. The principles engaged in this unification are: *kalā*, formed of air, is that which impels and consists of a limited capacity for action; the impure knowledge, formed of fire, which illuminates and consists of a limited capacity for knowing; *māyā*, formed of water, is that which satiates; the power of attachment, expressed in the verse by the word *Indra*, formed of earth, and consisting of intense affection, is by nature a stopping, an immersion.

These are the four powers that maintain the individual soul resting in the middle like Triśaṅku, which otherwise would fall into the condition of complete inertia like a rock, or would ascend into the sky of consciousness like the supreme Lord. In either case, in the absence of the finite knowing subject, there would be no knowable objects, nor would there be contraction and expansion, because without contraction, expansion is not logically possible. This is absurd, because the entire universe, that is, the manifestation of the knowable object or the manifestation of the corresponding knower, is projected by the Emissional force which is precisely expansion and contraction.

The power of space plays no role in sustaining the finite subject. For the power of space is inherent in the individual soul as the true subjectivity, at once empty of objects and providing a place in which objects may be known. This is the Emissional Power in its lowest form.

When the aspect of objectivity begins by degrees to be concealed, and the form of consciousness begins to unfold, then to that degree there occurs a firmness, an increasing fullness of the form of consciousness; a union with its own light, a vibration which is characterized by the attainment of supreme freedom. Everything is then thoroughly pervaded by the form of consciousness.

The expression "the pentad of *brahman*" refers to the five phonemes *Ś* to *KṢ*, which pervade, fulfill, cause to expand the Self. They relate the five principles to Vidyā, Īśvara, Sadāśiva, Śakti and Śiva. They are formed of the "subtle" earth, water, fire, air and space, and correspond to the five faces of Śiva: Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna. This is the Emissional Power in its intermediate form.

Finally, these pentads are resolved into the Ultimate, *A*. In this way, the Emissional Power expands with a form that extends from the lunar stations beginning with *A*, to the pentad of *brahman*. This is the wheel of powers of the Lord (*śakticakra*), of Bhairava, a wheel which is an uninterrupted continuous series. The five powers of consciousness, bliss,

will, knowledge, and action, which are made of the five "elemental" powers, are, in effect, the powers of consciousness placed in the triangle, namely the Ultimate, the will and the unfolding (*A I U*), which then unfold into a fivefold division.

Therefore, all this is at first formed of an undivided self-referential consciousness. Then, because of an act of self-divided consciousness, whose nature is an awareness of distinctions, it assumes the form of fifty cognitions which attain the state of being objects, and thus the group of external objects arises. The life of these principles results precisely because they are essentially moments of conscious cognition. This is the form of the *mātṛkā*.

For this reason, that is the source of all *mantra*-s. It is the cause which consists of an undivided self-referential consciousness; whether it be of *mantra*-s whose meaning is hidden, *bīja-mantra*-s, that is, seed-syllables, or *piṇḍa-mantra*-s comprising groups of syllables such as the *catuṣkala* or *navātma*, and which are determined by a male divinity which they express; or whether it be the *vidyā*-s, such as the garland-*mantra*-s, such as for example, the *mantra namaḥ-śivāya*, whose meaning is clearly known to all, and which are determined by a female divinity which they express.

Everything whatsoever which is said in the secret books sacred to Śiva-Rudra, and so on, arises from this reality. That form indeed, which bestows the lowest and the highest powers, all that is obtained in the thirty-six principles. Self-referential consciousness constitutes the "life" of those thirty-six principles. The "cognizable objects" which are the inert aspects form, so to speak, its body. That consciousness is found in the blessed Goddess, and therefore she is able to bestow everything. Because of this, in the text, the blessed Goddess assumes the role of the interrogator. She is celebrated as "beautiful", in the verse, when she arrives at a profound heart-felt realization of this consciousness. In the text she is called "glorious" in order to celebrate her becoming possessed of omnipresence.

This is the threefold manifestation, which has the phoneme *A* as its root, and ends in the phoneme *KṢA*. That manifestation is in the abode of the Ultimate *A*, has its beginning in the Ultimate *A*, and finally therein comes to repose in the very Śiva. Therefore, by that knowledge, the true nature of the Ultimate, of the vibration, comes to be well known. Which is to say, that the Ultimate is only that, i.e., the entire *sṛṣṭi* is really only the Ultimate *A*. Thus, the power which abides in the Heart is, above all, formed of an undivided self-referential consciousness. Then, that power, by its own innate freedom formed of the Ultimate *A*, turns itself into distinct cognitions whose form is the *kaulika-siddhi*. This has been decisively ascertained in all the *tantra*-s such as the *Śiva, Rudra, Rahasya*, and so on.

[*Objection:*] But our doubts concerning the nature of the Heart, which is at once an undivided self-referential consciousness, and which is the root for the several different cognitive awarenesses, have not been removed.

[*Response:*] The *tantra* teaches the following in order to remove these doubts.

[*śloka 9:*]

O beautiful One, the Heart of the Self of Bhairava is the third *brahman*. It is united, O fair hipped One, with the fourteenth phoneme, and it is followed by the last of the master of the lunar stations. (*S-A U-Ḥ*)

[*commentary on 9:*]

The third *brahman* (*S*), whose nature is the Sadāśiva principle, and whose essence is the Light of Aghora, is characterized by the entire group of knowable objects, in a condition in which their "objectivity" has not yet become clear, which is to say, the totality in the form of Being (*sad*). This third *brahman* is continually fused, connected with the fourteenth vowel (*A U*), as well as reposing, that is, being inseparably connected with, that which is the end, in the sense of ultimate basis, of the Lords of the stations, of the fifteen vowels, reposing, that is, on the *visarga* (*Ḥ*). This is the Heart of the essence of the Self of Bhairava, that is to say, of the blessed "group of sounds" which has the totality as its body. The fourteenth vowel (*A U*) abounds in the perfectly full Ultimate (*A*) and bliss (*Ā*), and which is possessed of expansion (*U*) and diminution (*Ū*)—which are the body of the completely full power of action. The other two powers, the power of knowledge and the power of will, are compressed within that fourteenth vowel by means of the power of action.

For just as in the body, which is made up of all the principles and depends on various different parts, such as the skin, that Heart is called the place where there is a repose in the pure light and pure consciousness, which is not different from the parts of the body. In the same way, the body of the blessed Lord Bhairava, which is composed of various principles, worlds, and so on, which has a universal form, has a self-referential consciousness as its essence and is composed of the fifty phonemes. The Heart is the very essence of that, and is a self-referential consciousness which is non-different from all the parts of the body.

O Lady with beautiful hips! The Heart is the subtle vibration of the triangle which consists of the incessant expansion and contraction of the three powers, and it is the place of repose, the place of supreme bliss.

This very Heart is the Self of Bhairava, of that which is the essence of Bhairava, and of the Blessed Supreme Goddess who is inseparable and non-different from Him.

Consciousness, which is formed of the Ultimate (*A*), vibrates with a "seed" vibration in the two extreme points of the first vowel (*A*), two points whose nature is that of reposing in their own-nature. Because of the power of that vibration, consciousness, which is composed of the essence of all, becomes in the central point, the impulse toward the manifestation of the distinct and different "cognitions." For that reason it is said, "Having encompassed the manifestation . . . " (*śloka 30*).

[*śloka 10:*]

He who is not born of the *yoginī*, who is not Rudra, does not clearly obtain this Heart of the God of Gods, which immediately grants both liberation and union.

[*commentary on 10:*]

He who obtains this seed-*mantra*, in the very moment he obtains it, is no longer a bound creature. Because, when this seed-*mantra* is obtained, for him this Heart is produced. This Heart is the very condition of Bhairava. For that reason, as long as he is not born from the union of the pair—from the union of Rudra and the *yoginī*—that is to say, as long as he has not opened his vision to the very Self, or in other words, until a "descent of energy" (*śaktipāta*) has not fallen on him, how then could this Heart appear to him?

He is united with this Heart as soon as this has appeared before him. In fact, the state of liberation of one who is still alive, characterized by an absorption into the pair of the Śrī Bhairava, is precisely this attainment of the Heart. Because, as soon as it appears, the Ultimate (*A*), which is formed of consciousness only, grants the highest *kaulika* perfection, which is precisely a state of liberation while one is still alive. This has been demonstrated.

The Lord will now begin to show by what means even the nonsupreme perfections, characterized by various extraordinary powers, come about because of the power of the self-referential nature of consciousness, and are independent of the power of the mass of practices such as vital breath, subtle channels, appropriate times of day, *mantra, vidyā*, rules of conduct and so on.

[*śloka 11:*]

When the *mantra* has been "pronounced," the entire great multitudes of *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s appear immediately before him, characterized by absorption in his own body.

[*śloka 12:*]

He who "remembers" during forty-eight minutes, sealed in the navel, in the *cumbaka*—"kissing pose"—such a man always binds in his own body the host of *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s.

[*śloka 13:*]

When asked, he can even tell about past and future things.

"Pronouncing," that is "remembering," during a period of three hours, the form of the divinity which he desires to reach . . .

[*śloka 14:*]

Without any doubt, he beholds before his very eyes that divinity attracted by the powers of Rudra.

Practicing remembrance for only two periods of three hours, he becomes one who resides in the ether.

[*śloka 15:*]

With three periods of three hours, all the Mothers, the powerful mistresses of Yoga, the heroes, the Lords of the heroes, and the mighty troop of the Śākinī-s:

[*śloka 16:*]

All these, having arrived, impelled by Bhairava who gives the sign, grant the supreme perfection or whatever boon is desired.

[*commentary on 11-16:*]

It has been said that if the principle of consciousness obtains the state of being the Heart, then the condition of being free while still alive ensues. Whenever a flowing form is produced by the condition of practice

due to the heating up of the vessel of awareness whose nature is the Heart, that flowing, by a regular absorption into the levels of body, mind, and breath, just like quicksilver penetrating into metal, negates the insentiency of breath and mind. Then, because of the practice of absorption into our own consciousness, even regardless of the disciplines of *yoga* taught in other texts, such as the mastery over the breath and subtle channels, the lower *kaulika* perfections consisting of magical powers are produced for him. This is the meaning.

When this seed is pronounced, that is, as soon as it is absorbed into the level of the vital breath, immediately the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s, whose bodies are the powers of knowledge and action respectively, appear before the one who pronounces the seed.

How? By penetrating into his body. Indeed, his own body is penetrated by that vital breath which is merged with the form of the Heart, whose characteristic is a completely full knowledge and action. Even the body which is filled by the Heart is penetrated by the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s whose nature is, respectively knowledge and action. Therefore, the basic principle of these supernatural powers is that they are governed by the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s.

If one practices such an absorption uninterruptedly during two periods of twenty-four minutes with mouth pursed as if to kiss, in the form of the hollow space formed by a crow's beak, tending to swallow—that is, to kiss the entire external "being," depending on the mass of objects (and this gesture of the mouth will produce the enjoyment of an extremely cold taste, whose nature is the *soma*-moon, and whose form is the condition of "being" [the phoneme *S*])—and "being sealed in the navel," that is, having as limit the site of the navel by the practice of the absorption into the "full pot," then the entire assemblage of *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s are manifested in his body, which is then as if ruled by them. Here the term *body* means as much the levels of speech and body proper, as well as the individual self, that is, the mind.

Because he is thus penetrated by the powers of action and knowledge, whatsoever question is posed to him, and instantly past, present, and future appear before him, all that according to truth.

When such a practice, consisting of absorption into the *mantra*-s and *mudrā*-s in their universal form, has become strong, if he extends it constantly in the midst of that practice to three hours without interruptions, shining simultaneously, of one taste, whatsoever divinity connected with a *mantra* or *mudrā* is placed in his Heart, then that divinity is brought near by the powers of Rudra, is drawn to him by the powers of Rudra, formed by the power which develops from his constant absorption. He sees it before his very eyes, in identity with his own body, because its form has been known.

Then even as he continues to appropriate these divinities into himself—if he does not abandon his absorption—then remaining continuously absorbed for two periods of three hours, he no longer perceives his own body, vital breath, and so on, and beholds unveiled the entire mass of the form of consciousness. Then, if he remains in that state for two periods of three hours, all distinctions are completely destroyed and his own body becomes similar to that of someone else.

Moreover, when he does not abandon the practice of absorption even then, but abides constantly absorbed for three periods of three hours without interruption, then he will behold the Mothers, Brahmī and the others; the Yogeśvarī-s, Mistresses of Yoga; the Vīra-s, heroes perfected by the practice of the *cakra* and led by Aghora; and the Lords of the Heroes beginning with the nine-souled Deity. The Siddhas, whose powers are born of the practice of the *cakra*, also appear. All these are endowed with the great power of Bhairava. Even the groups of Śākinī's, the divisions of the *śakti*-s, such as the various groups Khecarī-s, and so on, all are powerful by the power of Bhairava. All these bestow the state of freedom in this very body, the supreme perfection with regard to the path that extends from the "earth" to Śiva. Therefore, all these various divinities beginning with the Mothers are totally impelled by Bhairava, who gives the sign, according to the agreed upon rules, the Lord who holds them in identity with his own nature as manifesting and revealing his own nature, and as dependent upon the wheel of Bhairava.

For he whose vital breath, and so forth, are filled by that, by those divinities, is the Lord of the wheel, and has become Bhairava himself, and therefore they follow him, as it says in the verse, they arrive before him.

Therefore, they are able to bestow whatsoever particular desire is held in our heart, whether it be from amongst the highest, middle, or lowest group of desires, such as a sword, an unguent, the highest of the underground regions.

Whereas in the other forms of *yoga* beginning with the mastery over the subtle channels and vital breath, because of a dependence with regard to things external to the *yoga*, such as the totality of different disciplines, there exists a limitation with regard to given time periods and so forth.

As it is said:

"The *kula*-seed is within the belly of the fish. Its fruition, that is, the Kaula, is available during the *kṛta-yuga*—the Golden Age—and so on."

Herein there is no distinction whatsoever. Thus the Lord teaches:

[*śloka 17:*]

By means of the Heart certain possessors of the *mantra* have become

perfected, some will become perfected, and some are presently leading others to perfection.

[*commentary on 17:*]

Thus, the power of absorption into the energy of the *mantra* is the same in all three time periods. But—someone might object—what do they lead to perfection by means of that *mantra*?

[*śloka 18a:*]

Whatsoever is in the *Bhairava Tantra*, all that is lead to perfection by that.

[Note on 18b: Gnoli expunges verse 18b on the grounds that it bears a resemblance to a passage he inserted in the above commentary. 18b would read:

["Because of the power of absorption in the force of the *mantra*—no limits remain."]

[*commentary on 18a:*]

Whatsoever is declared to be perfected in other treatises, all that is perfected by this *mantra*. Moreover, what is the use, in this respect, of taking notice of all the possible things than can be perfected.

Someone might doubt: by what method is this *mantra* to be possessed?

The Lord replies:

"In this doctrine there is no limitation whatsoever."

Here what is to be perfected is only the attainment of that *mantra*, but neither vows nor formulas are of any useful assistance whatsoever. The only thing of any use here is the complete destruction of the disease of doubt, because doubt, the essence of which is uncertainty and error, is the principal obstacle to an absorption whose nature is the cognition of that which has one taste. He will make this clear in the next verse.

[*śloka 19:*]

Whoever knows truly, even though he may not have seen the *maṇḍala*, is forever united with the extraordinary powers, he is a *yogin*, and he has been initiated.

[*śloka 20a-21a:*]

Due to the mere knowledge of this, he is known by all the powers.

Indeed, even without this *yoga*, he becomes the equal to the family of Śākinī-s.

With respect to the sacrifice, he becomes a knower of the rite, even if he does not know the rules for the rite.

[*commentary on 19a-21a:*]

There exist many other rituals, but all the rituals for the entrusting and transmission of the *mantra*—from the installation of the deity to the ritual for the sacrificial priest—all collectively denoted in the verse as the "vision of the *maṇḍala*"—here all this is of no use whatsoever. He who knows in this way, without a doubt, truly, what has been said and what will be said, attains both kinds of perfection: enjoyment and liberation. He is truly joined with a *yoga* characterized by absorption. He has truly attained an initiation which is characterized by the destruction of the bonds of difference and the granting of the state of Śiva. From the mere knowledge of this, and he is known, that is, becomes renown, as one possessed of a completely full own-nature, which is characterized by all the powers. Because, even without this *yoga* characterized by the practice of absorption, he becomes an equal, a companion to the wheel of deities, to the family of Śākinī's, because of the fulfilling of all things by the mere knowing of this.

The various ritual regulations which concern the sacrifice, this is what must be accomplished. Even if he is ignorant of these, he becomes one who knows what must be done because of the acquisition of the complete fruit of that *mantra.* He who does not know as rules the well established rituals of the other schools: Ordinary, Vedic, Śaiva, Left-Handed, Right-Handed, Kaula, and so forth, he indeed here in the sacrifice becomes a knower of the ritual method because he knows the "method" of the Ultimate. With respect to the Ultimate, which is only consciousness, all other things are extraneous.

Someone may ask—how is that "seed," which is [described in verse 9, beginning] "United with the fourteenth"—how is that seed composed of the "cognition" of the supreme deity, that is, our own Self, with the fullness of all its powers which is nonseparate from the entire universe? To reply to this query, he will state:

[*śloka 21b:*]

Beginning with the *kālāgni*, the fire at the end of time, and ending with *māyā*, all resides in the body of *brahman.*

[*śloka 22:*]

[Prima facie:] Śiva is known to extend from the level of *viśva* to the level of *ananta.* Beyond that is the triad of powers. Whatsoever is within that is contained in the purified path.

[Abhinavagupta:] Śiva, the beginning of the totality, the supreme triad of powers resides within the endless. The knowledge that is within, that is contained in the purified path.

[*śloka 23a:*]

The atomic self speedily attains the pure and powerful knowledge [or the knowledge "relating to the Lord."]

[*śloka 23b-24a:*]

Śiva, the impeller of that *mantra*, is to be known as the omniscient One, the Supreme Lord, the omnipresent One, stainless, pellucid, satisfied, residing in himself, [Abhinavagupta: "making an effort within himself"], pure.

[*śloka 24b-25a:*]

Just as the large tree is to be found potentially in the banyan tree seed, so this world, both inanimate and animate, abides in the "seed" of the Heart.

[*commentary on 21-24:*]

Just as when one abandons the manifest expansion of an earthenware jug, all that truly remains is clay. When the manifest form of clay is left behind, all that truly remains is an odor. When the specific form of the odor is not cognized, what truly remains is the 'I'. When such a distinction has been shattered, what remains is an essence formed of happiness, suffering and error. When these three have been excised, there remain only the forms of the knower and the knowable. In the end, when even the distinction formed by subject and object has disappeared, all that remains is Being (*sad*). Even there, when the cognition of the three phonemes (of the word *sad*) has ceased, there ensues a repose in the first letter *S* alone. Then, this last repose in the phoneme *S*, is also the last repose of All—from the "water" principle to the *māyā* principle—of the entire range of knowable objects which appears in the midst of the impure path. At the moment of this last repose there appears the *brahman*, the All, one

homogeneous mass, immortal, which has become the *ātman*. This is the last repose of *brahmavādin*-s—the followers of Vedānta.

According to us, there occurs beyond that, Bhairava, who manifests the entire universe by means of his activity of "churning" that state of repose. As it says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.3):

> My womb is the great *brahman* and in it I place the seed.
> From this derives the origin of all beings, O Bhārata!

When, because of the disappearance of the distinction of its own-nature, the condition of repose in mere Being is no longer cognized, then Being appears to enter into a condition where it is absorbed into the powers of appearing light and self-referential consciousness. Because, in reality, that state of mere Being is not different from the true nature of such powers—what remains is the true nature of the power. That power is either will, action or knowledge, because nothing at all can appear without reposing on the power of such self-referential consciousness which is "I will," "I act," and "I know."

In the thought "I will" are intermixed the three powers—and in the same way in "I know," and "I act," because they are inseparably connected. Therefore, that which is becoming manifest appears as reposed in the own-nature which is composed of the triad of powers.

The true nature of this triad of powers is one, namely freedom, and because of this freedom, a true body made of two dots, formed of two knots, one above and one below, a body made of consciousness, whose nature is the supreme deity, Bhairava. The nature of these three phonemes is that they are composed of three states of repose in, respectively, the knowable object (*S*), the process of knowing (*AU*) and the knowing subject (*Ḥ*). Depending upon which state of repose one selects, the "pronunciation" extends as far as that phoneme alone. There thus occurs a threefold pronunciation. There are thus three types of perfection: enjoyment, enjoyment and liberation, and liberation.

When, in reference to an external object such as a pot, the place of repose is a single "cognition," then the All, devoid of succession, in the form of Being is emitted, thrown into the supreme Bhairava, by the power of the will, and that Being residing in the supreme Bhairava, nondifferent from it, by the same power of the will, and so on, is emitted outward into the external world where it assumes the form of the "knowable" objects. This is the abiding in the Emission (*Ḥ*).

The repose in the "fourteenth" (*AU*), which is the repose in the (three) powers, and that because of contact with both, that is, now with knowable objects whose nature is the Being, and now with the knowing subject whose

nature is the supreme Bhairava. With the descent of the knower and the process of knowing, Bhairava and the power, (*Ḥ* and *AU*), there occurs the repose in *brahman* (*S*), that is, a state of undifferentiated identity with the "knowable object." The reality which unifies, that makes of one taste (*ekarasa*) this triangle characterized of three Emissions, one appeased, one aroused, and one that is both, and is thus made of three reposes—that reality is the supreme Emissional principle, and it is the consciousness, the Lord Bhairava himself.

Let us now look at the grammatical construction and literal interpretation of the verses. All that is included between *kālāgni*, the first world of the earth principle, and the principle of *māyā*, all that reposes in the third *brahman*. The passage that begins with the word *All* and so on, means that Śiva, who is the beginning of the totality, the wheel of divinities of Bhairava, the supreme wheel of powers of Bhairava, formed of the three powers, resides within the Unbounded, which is to say the Emission. It is called Unbounded because with respect to it there is no limit—nothing higher. That which impels it is the "fourteenth," whose nature is the vital breath, because without the vital breath it cannot give impulse to the manifestation, and that "fourteenth" pervades the entire pure-impure path from the principle of Śiva down to the principle of knowledge. Because of that, in the verse he is known as the great Lord.

He is the knower and actor with respect to everything whether it be differentiated or differentiated-nondifferentiated, because his true nature is that of being a knowing subject, that is, only consciousness, because he is far beyond the expansion and contraction of a material body. He is the supreme Lord, he is omnipresent, from the moment that beginning with the class of the Vidyeśvaras one is freed from falling into the narrow defile of *māyā*; spotless because free of all adventitious bonds; pellucid because of the nonexistence of imperfections of the innate atomic stains; satisfied because of a lack of desire for any separate knowable object due to the gradual concealing of "this," that is, the group of knowable objects, by the 'I'; residing in himself, that is, making an effort in himself, whose nature is an awakening of bliss; and finally, pure, because of the disappearance of impurities of differentiation.

Such is the nature of the impelling element; whatsoever atomic self rests in the firm practice of absorption, of repose into this impelling element, such a one speedily obtains knowledge, and implied in that, the power of action, appropriate to the Lord, which is present in that impelling element, contained in the elements that go from the pure knowledge up to the principle of Śiva relating to the pure-impure path, (relatively) pure knowledge and action, that is, high-low. This is a brief designation of the various fruits that may be obtained by the practice of these three reposes. In the

fourth and highest repose, everything exists in perfect undifferentiated identity, with one taste. Just as in the seed of the banyan tree the great tree exists in identity with the power of the own form which constitutes its nature, so in the seed of the Heart appear all things moving and non-moving, that is, pure and impure, knowing subject or known object, all things shine there as identical with the power within the Heart.

He now clarifies, by means of a summary, the fruit of absorption into the supreme Bhairava which he had previously hinted at in the words "Immediately granting union and liberation" [*śloka* 10].

[*śloka 25:*]

He who thus truly knows has received an initiation that leads to *nirvāṇa*, undoubted, even if he is deprived of oblation (*āhuti*), of melted butter, of sesame seed.

[*commentary on 25:*]

He who know in this way, that is, in the manner which we have described, the Heart, truly, that is, with certainty, beyond doubt, his is the initiation, truly, in reality, by means of which he attains the fruit of *nirvāṇa*. That initiation is undoubted, is a fact of one's own conviction and occurs when one attains the essential form of the Heart. The initiated one knows this supreme knowledge characterized by the Heart and which is given by the divinities of Bhairava who are within the Heart and who bring an escape from the vibration of manifestation which leads to an obscuring of the Self, and are rather directed towards the supreme vibration which consists of the opening of the Self. These same divinities destroy the chief bond which is the state of contraction. Therefore, initiation is characterized by a giving and destroying and its essence is a condition of clear insight [or "would lead to the light of the self" (*svaprakāśa*)]. The sesame seed, and so on, are there of no use whatsoever. So far the sense is that for the one intent upon being entirely in the highest perfection whose nature is the state of being liberated while still alive, except for the attainment of the seed of the Heart, there is nothing at all that is of any use.

The rites of adoration (*pūjā*) which might be useful for the practice of absorption ought to be described, for as he will say later on "He who has correctly accomplished the ritual of adoration . . . " [*śloka* 33].

In this respect, we can say that the practice of absorption can have as object either the body, the vital breath, or can take place on the level of the mind. He will now show the rituals of "imposition" (*nyāsa*) which should be carried out in order to acquire the Heart.

[*śloka 26:*]

Having made the "imposition" on the head, on the face, on the Heart, and on the genitals, and then on the image, and having bound up his top-knot repeating the *mantra* over it twenty-seven times,

[*śloka 27:*]

He should then bind securely the ten regions one by one, starting off by noisily making three claps in order to remove all obstacles.

[*śloka 28:*]

Then he should sprinkle with water, over which the *mantra* has been muttered the same number of times as the top-knot, the flowers and so on, and then the entire *liṅga* and the sacrificial surface.

[*commentary on 26-28:*]

Before anything else, he should slap himself noisily three times corresponding to the three parts of the Heart *mantra* and to the corresponding three reposes. That is to say, he appropriates it and makes it his own in order to eliminate obstacles, which consist of a false notion which imagines that differences exist in the four spheres. Also externally, by the noise made when striking the face, the hands and the foot, the obstacle of differences in the infernal regions, the earth, and the heavens will be extinguished.

Having done this and when the place of the Heart, having already entered into a condition of identity with the abodes of the head, takes part in the method of the "staff," he then performs on the body the "imposition" by pronouncing the Heart-seed five times. This imposition participates in five vibrations whose characteristics are consciousness, bliss, will, knowledge, and action, which in turn are characterized by birth, motion, continuous stream, absorption, and cessation.

At this point he will bind up the top-knot—which is made up of the breath and mind and which participates in the state in which the pentad of *brahman* and thus the five powers which are in the body, such as the head, are not separated one from the other—by pronouncing the Heart-*mantra* twenty-seven times. The process of binding has as its nature a restraining made up of a repose in the form of the Heart. This figure of twenty-seven is computed as follows: each of the five powers is itself fivefold and to this are added two distinct points marking the beginning and end of the process.

In order to identify the ten regions with the Heart, in both of its forms, as "seed" and as place, he should bind them by means of the Heart-*mantra*, which is to be pronounced in each case only once. Of those ten regions, all that will be left as a remainder will be a cognition of the Ultimate in the form of the Heart.

Having done this, the instruments of adoration such as the flowers, and so on, also have to be made identical to the Heart by sprinkling them with the liquid which is pervaded with supreme bliss and which is contained in the sacrificial vessel. This liquid itself has been made identical to the Heart by the pronunciation of the Heart-*mantra* over it twenty-seven times.

Immediately after that, he should do the same for the support of the ritual of adoration, such as the sacrificial ground, the *liṅga*, and so on. The meaning of the *śloka* is that having dissolved the differences inherent in the body, in the breath, by means of identity, as well as removing the differences inherent in the abode of the sacrifice that is to be performed, and having set aside differences in the instruments of adoration, he should also remove any differences that remain in the support of the ritual of adoration itself.

Having done this, he goes on to describe the nature of the ritual of adoration accompanied by the mental construction of the image that is to be adored upon the support of the ritual which can be any one of hundreds of many forms—external or internal—adopted according to the worshippers pleasure and possibilities, such as a *liṅga*, a sacred space, or a *maṇḍala*.

[*śloka 29:*]

He should mentally construct a seat with flowers that have been muttered over with the four states.

[*śloka 30:*]

Therein the Hero should sacrifice to the manifestation, and again to the seat. Having "covered over" (*sampuṭīkṛtya*) the manifestation, he immediately afterwards begins the sacrifice (*yajana*).

[*śloka 31:*]

He should worship the Goddess, the greatly fortunate one, who is completely full of all principles, who is adorned with all limbs, blessed with the *mantra* repeated twenty-seven times.

[*śloka 32:*]

Then he should cause her to be honored (*samarcayet*) with sweet smelling flowers, and according to his powers, he should adore with supreme devotion, and offer up the very Self.

[*commentary on 29-32:*]

By the expression the "four states", we understand the body of the "seed" up to the phoneme *AU*, which pervades the tetrad of states from the waking state up to the "fourth." The seat is to be contemplated as including that pervasion of the four states. The manifestation which consists of the phonemes beginning with *A* and ending with *KṢA*, which has been appropriated by the power of the Emission, should be conceived as reposing on such a phoneme *AU*, as resting above it.

The sacrifice (*yāga*) is in fact the Emission, which is a resting in that repose whose nature is the "beyond the fourth," the mass of the nondifference of all things. He should then sacrifice projecting in that condition of the beyond the fourth, the portion of the Emission, which embraces the entire manifestation, projecting, that is, the form which ends with *AU*, which embraces in itself the tetrad of states beginning with the waking state. Because of this, the Emission, which is situated in the center, is in immediate contact with the states of the vowel (*AU*) and the Being (*S*), which are placed at both of its extremes. The Emission comes to appropriate the blessed supreme Goddess, whose nature is the Ultimate (*anuttara*), and who abides in nondifferentiation with the Supreme Bhairava, the great Lord. This power transcends all and at the same time is composed of all principles. It is joined with all the masses of existing things which thus form its limbs. The pervasion of the seat has been demonstrated as reached by a repose at all times in the body of the first part which is only Being, in the root portion of the Heart, whose form is the state of Being (*S*), and which consists of the knowable objects, and made up of three different states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, which are respectively very clear, less clear and unclear; and reposing in that, he should then repose in the state of the vowel (*AU*) which is higher, and gradually one arrives in the end at the principles of Śiva and *śakti* extending as far as the state of the "fourth." And because of this pervasion, one makes one's own all the different principles in series.

One then arrives at the sixteenth part, whose nature is the Emission, and which consists in Bhairava. The seventeenth part, that is, the Ultimate (*anuttara*), the supreme object of sacrifice, is of the form of the complete nondifference of all things which occurs when one conceives of it as much

transcending all and at the same time all exists in it in a nondifferentiated fashion. Because of that, the repose in it is completely full, and thus the *mantra* is repeated twenty-seven times. This is the true sacrifice.

In order that this sacrifice be successful, one must properly honor [the Goddess] with fragrant flowers which effortlessly allow for an entrance into the Heart. By flowers here are meant all substances—external and internal—which nourish the Heart because they bestow their own nature within the Heart. By the expression "according to his powers," he means both that power which is the expansion of his essential nature—because one who has not appropriated the essential nature of that power is not suited to perform the sacrifice since he is still "contracted"—or else he refers to the blissful external power which is useful for developing the inner power. This power is found in external materials suitable for the sacrifice such as ablutions, unguents, incense, betel leaf, spirituous liquors.

But one may ask: how should he sacrifice properly? With the highest devotion, with reverence and with great faith, all of which grant him absorption. This great devotion consists in effecting the subordination of the finite levels of the body, the vital breath and the subtle body. This subordination consists in accomplishing a state of humble devotion, whose nature is an immersion into the essence of that which results in the removal of those finite levels and the establishment of the superiority of the supreme consciousness, whose nature is the divinity which has been described and which is to be sacrificed to.

The expression *parā bhakti* may be understood differently. Here *bhakti* is the most pleasant portion (*bhāga*) of the flowers and the other instruments of the sacrifice, that is, it is the perfume which is so charming that it can cause an entrance by force into our own Heart. He should therefore know his own Self as filled by that devotion, in both senses, know firmly, sure in the knowledge that it is in a state whose form is nondifferent from all that exists.

Thus, the one who performs the sacrifice should, while he pronounces the *mantra* twenty-seven times, know the Self as made up of the supreme blessed Goddess whose essential form is nondifferent from all and which is completely filled with all the multitudes of beings, inner and outer, such as the various kinds of flowers, and so on. In this way, he should repeatedly consider and think about the Self, again and again. This is, in sum, the nature of the adoration (*pūjā*), that it consists of a filling up of our own Self.

The consideration of the oblation is now taken up. The knowable principle of reality is a stream that comes forth from the Lord Bhairava, the highest enjoyer. The nature of that principle is that it is the All, like the food that has been eaten and held in the belly. The libation functions as that which inflames, stimulates that enjoying subject and gives it the

power to destroy, to burn, and to dissolve the very essence of the eaten food and all the remaining residues that are within that. In fact, residual impressions are always tending to rise up just like seeds, like the state of deep sleep. Because of that oblation, in the manner of a digestion, a state of mind results which appeases the doubt, the great ailment of the flowing out of differences whose root are the always arising latent and residual impressions. It is with this purpose that he has summarized the ritual of sacrifice and places an emphasis on the process of oblation.

[*śloka 33a:*]

In this way the sacrifice has been expounded. This prescribed rule is to be applied in the fire ceremony.

[*commentary on 33a:*]

Here also the sprinkling of the sesame grains and the other ingredients of the sacrifice, including the large and the small spoons, with the water that has been blessed by reciting the *mantra* over it the same number of times as over the top-knot, occurs. There then occurs the act of throwing the supreme divinity, that is, the object of the sacrifice, into the fire, executing the instructions that are contained in the verses beginning with [29]: "Mentally constructing a seat by means of flowers that have been muttered over fourteen times" and ending with the verse [30]: "Having 'covered over' the manifestation."

Then the oblation of sesame grains and melted butter is completely fulfilled. This is a complete offering of the oblation according to the method described in the words "He should offer up the very Self." [32] This is the method of the fire-ritual. Thus, adoration (*pūjā*) is a combination of two elements sacrifice (*yāga*) and oblation (*homa*). The nature of adoration is, in fact, perfect fullness. In this way the blessed supreme Goddess, who is identical to our very Self, is well adored.

Since, until the inner impurity is destroyed, the condition of the identity of All with consciousness is not completely fulfilled. Therefore, in order to develop in us the inner idea that this is the true adoration, and to absorb in himself all external substances, he says the following:

[*śloka 33b:*]

He who has correctly carried out the procedure of adoration, and who remembers the "seed," he successfully accomplishes his goal.

[*śloka 34:*]

The "seed" which has no beginning and no end, which moves in the midst of the "stations," expanding, this he should meditate in the lotus of the Heart, and always practice the rays of the moon.

[*commentary on 33-34:*]

Completely, that is, he who has carried out the procedure of adoration by the method that has been described; completely, that is, he who remembers, cognizes the "seed," by the manner which has been described and will be described; he successfully accomplishes his goal, becomes with this very body a vessel for all the extraordinary powers, as well as for the supreme Bhairava.

This cognition of the Heart is designated as an object of memory because even though it appears as always new, each of its previous appearances is still completely present (because it is totally devoid of temporal differences) and because all that appears in it is an entirely interior reality. Therefore it is similar to things that are remembered. This is also indicated by the use of the participial suffix (of the word *remembering*) which shows that the present is not split off from the past. This cognition must be appropriated, made one's own, as a reality that is empty of differences, whose nature is that it appears all at once, devoid of time.

Thus he says "perfectly remembering," even though that state of completeness has been previously discussed in the verse (21) which states: "Beginning with the fire of time," nevertheless he now examines in a clear and extensive way, in the verses "Devoid of beginning and end," that which he has already traced out.

The "seed" whose function is to carry the meaning, is the Heart, and its meaning is the "rays of the moon" (*somāṃśu*). The teaching is that he should practice according to the method of nondifference between the signifier and the signified, [where the "rays" of the moon] are interpreted as the great quantity of light which is joined together (*saṃghaṭṭa*), and the moon (*soma* = *Sa* + *Umā*) is the pair of the blessed Lord Bhairava and his power (*śakti*).

According to another reading, we may read "the moon and its parts" (*somāṃśa*), the supreme object of light and bliss, whose nature is the moon of completely full knowledge. This is the Great Heart, the triangle, the Ultimate, filled by its three parts each of which is higher than the last, that is, the phonemes *S*, *AU* and *Ḥ*, which great Heart has as its basis the never obstructed capacity for carrying out hundreds of "openings and closings" of the All (*unmeṣa-nimeṣa*), as shown by the power of contraction

and expansion (*saṃkoca-vikāsa*), whose essence are the functions of appearing, that is, blazing forth, and disappearing, that is, dissolving down. This Heart thus has three parts or portions. The compound *somāṃśa* is thus interpreted as a collective compound (*samāhāra-dvandva*), that is to say, the "moon" and its "parts."

This is the tetrad, the moon and its three parts, the Heart, which being present and being reposed in one's own Heart, whose form is a consciousness of the self, must be projected within himself in order to obtain an absorption whose nature is that it appropriates the levels of mind, breath, and body. He should place the entire group (*kula*), consisting of the mind, breath, body and senses, so that its one essence is resting on that tetrad, with its inert character having been dissolved, whose principal part is the cognition of the form of that tetrad. Because of the expansion of its light, he will arrive at a state where the *kula* becomes light. In this way the absorption of the tetrad of the Emissional Power in the levels of body, breath, and so on, has been shown.

Therein, the principal thing which he expounds is the essential nature of the Heart in all its fullness. The Heart is the seed of All devoid of beginning and end, of coming into being and of destruction. Because it is a seed, it expands into the form of All, it moves incessantly to expansion. This Heart which moves in the midst of the Lunar stations made up of time—of the All—is present in everything in the form of an undifferentiated self-referential consciousness. He should continually meditate on this seed of the Heart as having penetrated into his own Heart, into his consciousness, which is in the form of the lotus-flower because it plays at expanding and contracting. He should meditate on this seed which having entered into his consciousness causes it to expand by bringing about the removal by force of the contraction. In this way there occurs the attainment of the state of Bhairava in all its fullness.

With respect to the pronunciation and to the recitation of the Heart-*mantra:* beginning and end are to be interpreted as meaning the vowels and consonants. The Heart-*mantra*, devoid of vowels and consonants is only the *visarga* (*Ḥ*). From that *visarga* the other fifteen lunar stations (i.e., vowels) expand out, and thus the *visarga* stands in the midst of all the "stations." As has been said before, this is to be meditated in the lotus of the Heart.

With respect to this "seed" itself, the beginning and end are the consonant (*S*) and the *visarga* (*Ḥ*). Without these the "seed" consists only of the "trident" (*AU*). He should meditate in the Heart, with the form of the "seed" that which expands in the "stations," here understood as the finite energies or parts of the ascending and descending breath, *prāṇa* and *apāna*. This is the seed which goes into the midst, that is, it becomes

absorbed into the form of the vital breath, and, by means of the vital breath, becomes absorbed into the body.

The word *ādi* can be interpreted as the phonemes which comprise the class of vowels, that is, the vowels beginning with *A* (*A* + *ādi*). The word *end* refers to the *visarga* (*Ḥ*), as we have already seen in the verse that reads "The end of those, which are in union with time" [*śloka* 5]. According to this interpretation, the "seed," which is devoid of vowel or *visarga*, is none other than the phoneme *S*, unaccompanied by a vowel. This stands in the middle of the stations, the finite energies of the ascending and descending breath, which are thus "expanding." This is the seed that is to be meditated in the body, in the Heart.
He will now describe the fruit of such a practice.

[*śloka 35:*]

Whatsoever desires he may long for, he will quickly obtain them.
Immediately he is placed face to face with That, and obtains omniscience. Of that there is no doubt.

[*śloka 36:*]

Thus one obtains the fruit of the *mantra*, and therefore this is the union of Rudra (*Rudra-yāmala*). Perfection (*siddhi*) comes as a result of it and the attainment of omniscience.

[*commentary on 35-36:*]

The various perfections have been described in the verse which reads [*śloka* 21] "Beginning with the *kālāgni.*" As for the word *quickly*, see the stanza that reads [*śloka* 12] "But he who remembers for a period of forty-eight minutes."

The phrase "placed face to face with That and obtains omniscience" has been explained when the attainment of an absorption with a duration of three periods of forty-eight minutes was described [*śloka* 15]. When the absorption into the Heart is maintained for four periods of forty-eight minutes, then the totality, whose nature is essentially light, attains the condition of day, and the contraction of night of *māyā* is destroyed. Then the practitioner, with this very body, becomes omniscient like Bhairava.

The last verse, which begins "thus," summarizes everything. Since all the fruits of the *mantra* consisting in the higher and lower perfections are obtained due to the attainment of the ultimate seed (*anuttara-bīja*), therefore, because of the fact that it bestows the fruits of the Rudra-pair,

it is called the *Rudra-yāmala*, containing twelve and a half million verses. Śiva and his *śakti* are to be found there in a state of perpetual union.

Because of this, the fruit that may be obtained as a result of this practice is, in short, the attainment of the condition of Bhairava, which may be characterized as omniscience and omnipotence, he therefore states [in verse 36], "Because of this practice" and so on.

Even without this practice, the state of liberation in this life, the supreme *kaulika* perfection may be obtained. Thus Śiva.

1. What is cut and shattered and well concealed by the language of the Tantra, that Ultimate (*anuttara*) has been expounded here by Abhinavagupta.
2. Faithful to this discrimination, do not become vessels for error. You, my good disciples, obtain today the complete acquisition of the condition of Bhairava.
3. You, who are experienced in the absorption that swallows up the three worlds, may you know the joy of union and the completely full bliss of the Ultimate.
4. I extol that ultimate consciousness from which and in which the entire fullness of being is emitted by means of will, knowledge and action.
5. Whose power is always new, and the God, the great Lord, who is hidden by that power, I bow down to Śiva, new and hidden, in the form of the divine pair.

This Examination of the Principle of the Ultimate known as the Short Gloss on the Supreme, the Queen of the Three has been concluded. It is the work of the venerable and renowned Abhinavagupta obtained by reflection on the lotus feet of the three-eyed Lord. This is Śiva.

Notes

1. Introduction and Methodological Considerations

1. The position of the Kashmiri Shaivites with regard to *yoga* and to *jñāna* is best understood through an appreciation of the three energies of the triangle of the heart (*trikoṇa* and *triśūla*) and in the perspective of the three paths that start from there. All manifestation evolves from that triangle as a pure and shimmering flow from the divine Heart and it is thus, through the vibration of his own heart, that man reunites with the center of the *trikoṇa*, by becoming conscious of himself. [author's translation] Lilian Silburn, trans., *La Bhakti: Le "Stava-cintāmaṇi" de Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 19, Études sur le Śivaïsme du Kaśmīr, tome 1 (Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard avec le concours du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1964), p. 84.

2. On the problems regarding the name of this tradition which has been up until now called "Kashmir Shaivism" see pp. 16-18.

3. See chap. 2 below for mention of Śambhunātha. Also see Kanti Chandra Pandey, *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study*, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Studies, vol. 1, 2d ed., rev. and enl. (Varanasi, India: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1963), pp. 132-252.

4. The Kaula lineage will be discussed below in chap. 2. Also see Pandey's *Abhinavagupta*.

5. Bhairava is the aspect of Śiva most often referred to in the Kashmir Shaiva texts. See Stella Kramrisch, *Manifestations of Shiva* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1981), p. 31, for excellent photographs of sculpture of Bhairava, the God of Dread and Terror.

6. Utpaladeva, *The Īshvara-Pratyabhijñā Vimarshinī*, with a Commentary by Abhinava-Gupta, ed. Paṇḍit Mukund Rām Shāstrī, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 22, 2 vols. (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1918), 2:111-117 (2.3.13), (hereafter cited as Abhinavagupta, *ĪPv*).

7. Raniero Gnoli, trans., *Luce delle Sacre Scritture* (*Tantrāloka*), Classici delle Religioni, sezione prima, Le religioni orientali (Torino, Italy: Unione Tipographico-Editrice Torinese, 1972), pp. 73-74, (line 36) (hereafter cited as Gnoli, *LDSS*).

8. We will encounter *soma* again in Abhinavagupta's formulations of the nature of the Heart.

9. Various aspects of the notion of *sādhanā* (related to the root *sādh*) will be examined in the doctrinal summary in chap. 2, and in more detail in chaps. 4 and 5.

10. See Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, chap. 1, pp. 1-26, for a full discussion.

11. *Parā-Trimshikā*, with a Commentary by Abhinava Gupta, ed. Mukunda Rāma, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 18 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1918), (hereafter cited as Abhinavagupta, *PTv*).

12. Abhinavagupta's teachers will be discussed in chap. 2. For a detailed discussion, see Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, chap. 5.

13. For more detail on problems relating to the notions of Tantra and Kaula see Sanjukta Gupta, Dirk Jan Hoens and Teun Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979), pp. 3-25. See the excellent articles by Alexis Sanderson in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (hereinafter *TER*), s.v. "Abhinavagupta," "Krama Śaivism," "Trika Śaivism," "Śaivism in Kashmir." See the articles by Andre Padoux in *TER*, s.v. "Tantrism," "Vīraśaivas," "Pratyabhijñā." See the articles by David N. Lorenzen in *TER*, s.v. "Śaivism," "Pāśupatas," Kāpālikas." See also Alexis Sanderson, "Purity and Power Among the Brahmans of Kashmir," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropological and Philosophical Perspectives*, Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes, eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.) (hereafter cited as Sanderson, "Purity and Power.") Sanderson often refers to the Trika-Kaula. The Trika in its third phase is Abhinavagupta's "catholic" synthesis and the Kaula represents an important stream of influence within it.

14. Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 876.

15. Harvey P. Alper, "Śiva and the Ubiquity of Consciousness: The Spaciousness of an Artful Yogi," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 7 (1979): 387 (hereafter cited as Alper, "Śiva").

16. Abhinavagupta, *Īśvarapratyabhijñā Vivritivimarśinī*, ed. Madhusūdan Kaul, 3 vols., Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, nos. 60, 62, 65 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1938-43), (hereafter cited as Abhinavagupta, *ĪPvv*).

17. Ninian Smart, *Reasons and Faiths*, International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), pp. 3, 11, 13.

18. Alper, "Śiva," p. 350, italics mine.

19. Smart, *Doctrine and Argument in Indian Philosophy*, Muirhead Library of Philosophy (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964), p. 144.

20. Alper, "Śiva," p. 351.

21. See pp. 42-43 below on the *RYT.*

22. For a first rendering of the entire text into English, see the appendix of this volume.

23. Jan Gonda, *A History of Indian Literature*, vol. 2, fasc. 1, *Medieval Religious Literature in Sanskrit* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977), p. 166.

24. See on the criticism that Jayaratha, author of the commentary on Abhinavagupta's *Tantrāloka*, makes of the fidelity and accuracy of Kṣemarāja's writings, the Introduction by Navajivan Rastogi to the newly republished *The Tantrāloka of Abhinavagupta* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987) edited by R. C. Dwivedi and Navajivan Rastogi, pp. 130-136. This Introduction has been expanded and published separately as *Introduction to the Tantrāloka: A Study in Structure* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987).

25. Abhinavagupta, *The Tantrāloka*, with Commentary by Jayaratha, ed. Mukunda Rāma and Madhusūdan Kaul, 12 vols., Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, nos. 23, 28, 30, 35, 36, 29, 41, 47, 59, 52, 57, 58 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1918-1938), chaps. 3, 13, 29 (hereafter cited as Abhinavagupta, *TĀ*).

26. I am indebted to Wendy D. O'Flaherty for this image of "brachiated chain mail." See her *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 21.

27. On the terms *jīvanmukta*—"enlightened while still alive"—and *siddha*—"perfected one,"—see the translation of the *PTlv* in the appendix.

28. All of the Sanskrit terms mentioned here (and many times left untranslated) will be explored in detail below. Translations or equivalent expressions will be offered. Some of these translations will be quite idiosyncratic, mainly because the terms are so dense with meaning as to be finally nonrenderable by any single English equivalent. To indicate this, certain terms will be consistently rendered with expressions which will be capitalized. For example, the notion of *visarga-śakti* will always be translated as "Emissional Power."

29. Smart, *Worldviews: Crosscultural Explorations of Human Beliefs* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983), p. 33.

30. Mircea Eliade, "Methodological Remarks on the Study of Religious Symbolism," in *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*, ed. Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), p. 95.

31. Susan K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art*, 3d ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 60.

32. Ibid., p. 47.

33. Ibid.

34. L. A. Reid *Beauty and Significance*, p. 132, quoted in Susan K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, p. 262.

35. Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in M. Banton, ed., *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1966), p. 5.

36. Ibid., p. 3.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid., p. 6.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid., p. 7. This important point will be discussed when we consider the notion of experiential replication.

41. Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, pp. 14-24, quoted in Gerald James Larson, "The Symbolism of the 'Motherhood of God' in Indic and Christian Culture," in *In Her Image: The Great Goddess in Indian Asia and the Madonna in Christian Culture*, ed. Gerald James Larson, Pratapaditya Pal, and Rebecca P. Gowen (Santa Barbara: Regents of the University of California, 1980), p. 11.

42. Abhinavagupta, *Dhvanyāloka* 1.7-13, quoted in Raniero Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, vol. 62, 2d ed., rev., enl. and re-elab. (Varanasi, India: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1968), p. xxix.

43. See Ricoeur, p. 23, cited in Larson, *In Her Image*, p. 11.

44. Thomas J. J. Altizer, *Mircea Eliade and the Dialectic of the Sacred* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 17, quoted in Guilford Dudley III, *Religion on Trial: Mircea Eliade and his Critics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1977), p. 105.

45. Eliade, *The History of Religions*, pp. 98-99. Eliade continues on p. 103: "The religious symbol translates a human situation into cosmological terms and vice versa; more precisely it reveals the continuity between the structures of human existence and cosmic structures. This means that man does not feel himself "isolated" in the cosmos, but that he "opens out" to a world which, thanks to the symbol, proves "familiar." On the other hand, the cosmological values of symbols enable him to leave behind the subjectivity of a situation and to recognize the objectivity of his personal experiences. It follows that he who understands a symbol not only "opens out" to the objective world, but at the same time succeeds in emerging from his particular situation and in attaining a comprehension of the universal. This is explained by the fact that symbols have a way of causing immediate reality, as well as particular situations to 'burst'."

46. Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: New American Library, A Meridian Book, 1958), p. 449.

47. Ibid., p. 450.

48. Ibid., p. 451.

49. Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, trans. Philip Mairet (New York: Sheed and Ward, A Search Book, 1969), p. 121.

50. parameśaśaktipāta

51. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 136, cited in Raniero Gnoli, "Vāc: Passi Scelti e Tradotti dal *Parātriṃśikāvivaraṇa*," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 40 (1965): 225.

52. See, for example, Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.73, 4.145; Raniero Gnoli, trans., *Essenza dei Tantra* (*Tantrasāra*), La Dottrina dell'India nella Biblioteca Boringhieri, 2 vols. (Turin, Italy: Editore Boringhieri, 1979), p. 187 (hereafter cited as Gnoli, *EDT*); Lilian Silburn, trans., *"Śivasūtra" et "Vimarśinī" de Kṣemarāja*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 47, Études sur le Śivaïsme du Cachemire, École Spanda (Paris: Institut de Civilisation Indienne avec le concours du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1980), p. 69. The Sanskrit edition of the *ŚSv* is to be found in: Vasugupta, *Śiva Sūtra with the Vimarśinī of Kṣemarāja*, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 1 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1911). Because of the difficulty in obtaining this book, references to the Sanskrit of the *ŚSv* will be made to the text as it is found in Jaideva Singh, *Śiva Sūtras* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979). Singh reproduces the Sanskrit text of both the *sūtra*-s and Kṣemarāja's *Vimarśinī*.

53. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.243b.

54. upāyakauśalya

55. asaṃketika

56. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 165, cited in Raniero Gnoli, "Vāc," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 34 (1959): 178. See references to other occurrences of this image in Abhinavagupta's work cited here by Gnoli in note 5, p. 178.

57. See Rastogi's critique of the KSTS edition of the *TĀ* in his Introduction to the new publication of this text, pp. 155-167.

58. See Raniero Gnoli's new critical edition and translation of this important text. Raniero Gnoli, *Il Commento di Abhinavagupta Alla Parātriṃśikā* (Roma: Instituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1985).

59. The present series published by State University of New York Press, The Śaiva Traditions of Kashmir, is beginning to address this problem.

60. See Alper's discussion of the fuzziness of the distinction between Śākta and Tantra in his Bibliographical Essay in *Understanding Mantras* (Albany: State University of New York Press, forthcoming) p. 398.

61. Alper, "Śiva," note 1, p. 386.

62. See Sanderson's review of Bhatt which shows that even the very orthodox and

conservative *āgama*-s had references to rituals involving cremation grounds and erotic practices. Alexis Sanderson, review of *Mataṅga-Parameśvarāgama avec le commentaire de Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha*, by N. R. Bhatt, ed., in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1984): 564-568.

63. See for example Lilian Silburn, trans., *La "Mahārthamañjarī" de Maheśvarānanda, avec des Extraits du Parimala*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 29, Études sur le Śivaïsme du Kasmīr, École Krama (Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard, 1968), p. 14 (hereafter cited as Silburn, *LMDM*). There are several published versions of the Sanskrit of this text. The first is, Maheśvara Nanda, *The Mahārtha-Mañjarī*, ed. Mukunda Rāma, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 11 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1918). The second is *The Mahārthamañjarī with the commentary Parimala of Maheśvarānanda*, ed. T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, no. 66, 1919. It is this second, and much more complete, version of the text and its commentary which Silburn employed in her *LDMD*. However, this edition was not available to me although I did consult the considerably abridged version in the KSTS. In addition, the numbering of the verses in these two editions varies considerably. In order to simplify matters I will make references in these notes only to Silburn's *LDMD*, which does include the Sanskrit for the verses. A more recent version of the *MM* edited by V. V. Dviveda (Varanasi, 1972) was not available to me during the writing of this book.

64. Jagadish Chandra Chatterji, *Kashmir Shaivaism* (Srinagar, India: Research and Publication Dept., Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 1962).

65. See note 13.

66. *TER*, vol. 13, p. 16.

67. Ibid., p. 17.

68. Alper, ed., *Understanding Mantras*, p. 371.

69. See *A Descriptive Analysis of the Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies* (Srinagar, Kashmir, India: Research and Publication Department, Jammu and Kashmir Government, n.d.).

70. For a good list of Abhinavagupta's works on aesthetics, see the bibliography in J. L. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics*, Bhandarkar Oriental Series, no. 9 (Poona, India: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1969).

71. For full citations of all works mentioned in this section, see the bibliography.

72. See Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, p. 180.

73. L. D. Barnett, trans., "The Paramarthasara of Abhinava-gupta," (with Sanskrit text), *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, parts 3-4 (1910): 707-747. For the controversy surrounding the *Paramārtha-sāra*, see Steven Jeffrey Kupetz, "The Non-Dualistic Philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism: An Analysis of the

Pratyabhijñā School" (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1972), p. 146; *Collected Papers of Professor S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri*, ed., T. M. P. Mahadevan (Madras, India: University of Madras, 1961), chap. 34.

74. Chatterji, *Kashmir Shaivaism*, p. 43.

75. Some of the important doctrines of the tradition will be discussed in chapter 2.

76. Chatterji, *Kashmir Shaivaism*, p. 8.

77. See the forthcoming *Handbook of Kashmir Shaivism* edited by Harvey Alper in this same series from State University of New York Press.

78. Lilian Silburn, trans., *Hymnes de Abhinavagupta*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, serie 8, fasc. 31 (Paris: Institut de Civilisation Indienne avec le concours du centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1970), note 2, p. 1.

79. See note 24 above.

80. See also his writings in Bengali and Hindi listed in the Bibliography of Jan Gonda, gen. ed., *A History of Indian Literature*, 2 vols., vol. 2, fasc. 2: *History of Tantric and Śākta Literature* by Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta, (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981) (hereafter cited as Goudriaan and Gupta, *HTŚL*.)

81. Singh has apparently also prepared a translation of the *PTv* into English, which is forthcoming.

82. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 78-95. In addition to these studies, a handful of other articles by Indian scholars which I have consulted are listed in the bibliography. I have also listed several unpublished doctoral dissertations from India, which I have been unable to locate. See, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, vol. 1: *Bibliography*, rev. ed., compiled by Karl H. Potter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); as well as its various updates in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy*.

83. Padoux's important book has appeared in a second edition which corrects a number of typographical errors in the first edition and includes an important new introduction. An English translation of this work is forthcoming from State University of New York Press.

84. Raniero Gnoli, "Alcune Techniche Yoge nelle Scuole Śaiva," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 29 (1956): 279-290.

85. See, for example, Gnoli's comments on p. 12 of the *EDT*.

86. Included in the bibliography are several other studies on Kashmir Shaiva topics by students of Gnoli.

87. Alexis Sanderson, "Mandala and Agamic Identity in the Trika of Kashmir" in Andre Padoux, ed., *Mantras et Diagrammes Rituels dans l'Hindouisme*

(Paris: CNRS, 1986).

88. M. S. G. Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration: An Analysis of the Doctrines and Practices of Kashmir Shaivism*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987).

2. The Historical Context

1. Jean Nadou, *Les Bouddhistes Kaśmīriens au Moyen Âge*, Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliotheque d'Études, vol 68 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968).

2. Alper, "Śiva," p. 390.

3. See Alper, "Śiva."

4. See Sanderson, "Purity and Power."

5. Pranabananda Jash, *History of Śaivism* (Calcutta: Roy and Chaudhury, 1974), p. 11.

6. Helene Brunner-Lachaux, trans., *Somaśambhupaddhati*, Publications de l'Institut Français d'Indologie, no. 25, 3 vols. (Pondichery: Institut Français d'Indologie, 1963), p. i.

7. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 177.

8. David N. Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 173.

9. Ibid.

10. Gonda, *Medieval Religious Literature*, p. 154.

11. Jan Gonda, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism: A Comparison* (London: Athlone Press, 1970; reprint, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1976), p. 18.

12. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 4.17, in Robert E. Hume, trans., *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, 2d ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1931; reprint, 1975), p. 405. (Unless otherwise noted, citations of page numbers in reference to quotations from the *Upaniṣad*-s will refer to the Hume translation. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* hereafter cited as *Śvet.*).

13. Ibid. 2.8-10, p. 398.

14. Ibid. 2.11, p. 398.

15. Ibid. 2.12, p. 398.

16. Thomas J. Hopkins, *The Hindu Religious Tradition*, The Religious Life of Man, ed. Frederick J. Streng (Encino, California: Dickenson Publishing Co., 1971), p. 88. See also Jacques Scheuer, *Śiva dans le Mahābhārata* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982.)

17. O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism*, p. 4.

18. Ibid., p. 36.

19. *Śiva-sūtra-vimarśinī* 1.12, see Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 51.

20. O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism*, pp. 10, 255.

21. See Andre Padoux's article in *TER*, s.v. "Tantrism."

22. Gupta, Hoens, and Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism*, pp. 44-46; Sanderson, "Purity and Power," note 25.

23. This statement in no way disputes that there were important and very early developments in Tantrism amongst Vaiṣṇava groups as well.

24. O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism*, p. 10.

25. Stella Kramrisch, *The Presence of Śiva* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 428.

26. Ibid., p. 20.

27. Gonda, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, p. 35.

28. Ibid., p. 41.

29. Ibid., p. 48.

30. Kramrisch, *Presence of Śiva*, p. 81.

31. Gerald James Larson, "A Formal and/or Structural Approach to Classical Sāṃkhya Philosophy," Paper presented at the American Academy of Religion meeting, San Francisco, December 1981.

32. Good studies of the Pāśupatas exist and should be consulted. See Haripada Chakraborti, *Pāśupata Sūtram* (Calcutta: American Publishers, 1970). See also Lorenzen, who gives an excellent bibliography, Gonda, *Medieval Religious Literature in Sanskrit*, and Jash. See also Lorenzen's shorter statement in *TER*. s.v. Pāśupata-s. Also G. Oberhammer's essay "The Use of Mantras in Yogic Meditation (Pāśupatam)" in Alper, ed., *Understanding Mantras*, pp. 204-223.

33. Lorenzen, *Kāpālikas*, p. 180.

34. Chakraborti, *Pāśupata Sūtram*, p. 19.

35. Ibid. 5.33, p. 176.

36. Ibid. 1.20-25, pp. 83-87; 1.33-38, pp. 91-93.

37. Ibid., p. 170.

38. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 15.604b, 37.14. In the second reference, he calls him *Lakuleśvara*.

39. The best study of these two "schools" is Lorenzen's.

40. Lorenzen, *Kāpālikas*, p. 13.

41. Ibid., p. 2.

42. Ibid.

43. R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems* (Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1965), p. 128.

44. Lorenzen, *Kāpālikas*, p. 97.

45. Ibid., p. 172.

46. Ibid., p. 108.

47. See Sanderson, "Purity and Power," on the contrast between these two modalities in Hindu thought.

48. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, trans., *Hindu Myths* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1975), p. 273.

49. Ibid., p. 274.

50. See on Bhairava, Elizabeth Chalier-Visuvalingam, "Bhairava: Kotwal of Vārānasī," in *Vārānasī Through the Ages* (Banaras: Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archeology, Banaras Hindu University, 1986.)

51. O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism*, p. 123. On Bhairava, see Kramrisch, *The Presence of Śiva*, pp. 250-300.

52. Lorenzen, *Kāpālikas*, p. 74.

53. Ibid., p. 80.

54. Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, trans. Willard R. Trask, Bollingen Series, no. 56 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 301 (hereafter cited as Eliade, *Yoga*).

55. Lorenzen, *Kāpālikas*, p. 35.

56. Ibid., p. 37.

57. B. N. Pandit, *Aspects of Kashmir Śaivism* (Srinagar: Utpal Publications, 1977), pp. 27-29.

58. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 303.

59. See Bibliography for full citations.

60. V. V. Raman Śāstrī, "The Doctrine and Culture of the Siddhas," in *Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. 2, pp. 303-319, quoted in Shashibhusan Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, 3d ed. (Calcutta: Firma KLM, 1969), p. 192.

61. Shashibhusan Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, p. 229.

62. Ibid., p. 245.

63. Ibid., p. 211.

64. Gonda, *Medieval Religious Literature*, p. 165.

65. Ibid., p. 173.

66. Ibid., p. 3.

67. Ibid., p. 2.

68. Alper, ed., *Understanding Mantras*, p. 418.

69. For a list of the works cited in the *TĀ* see Gnoli, *LDSS*, Appendix 13, pp. 883-892; Pandey gives a comprehensive list of all works cited in Abhinavagupta's texts in his *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 911-924. See also the comprehensive appendices in the Introduction to the new edition of the *TĀ*.

70. Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 13.

71. See Goudriaan and Gupta, *HTŚL*, for summaries of some of these texts and discussion of references to these texts in tantric literature.

72. See Alper, ed., *Understanding Mantras*, pp. 397-399 for a tidy discussion of the meanings of the term *śākta*.

73. Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 15, as well as his article "Gli Āgama Scivaiti nell'India Settentrionale," *Indologica Taurinensia* (1973): 61-69.

74. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 168.

75. Note Alper's critique of any characterization of the *āgama*-s as dualistic. See Alper, "Śiva," note 62, p. 400. See also Sanderson's article in *TER*, s.v. "Śaivism in Kashmir."

76. See Gonda, *Medieval Religious Literature*, p. 162.

77. So ably studied and expounded by H. Brunner-Lachaux. It is interesting that according to Sanderson, "Purity and Power," note 125, Sayojyotiḥ, Rāmakaṇṭha, and Somaśambhu were all Kashmiris.

78. K. Sivaraman, *Śaivism in Philosophical Perspective* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), p. 9.

79. T. M. P. Mahadevan, "Śaiva-Siddhānta," in *History of Philosophy Eastern and Western*, vol. 1, ed. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (London: George Allen and Unwin, n.d.), p. 378.

80. See more detail on the *RYT* in Goudriaan and Gupta, *HTŚL*, pp. 47, 85.

81. André Padoux, trans., *La "Parātriśikālaghuvṛtti" de Abhinavagupta*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 38 (Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard, 1975), p. 11 (hereafter cited as Padoux, *LPDA*); Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 9.313. See also Sanderson, "Mandala and Agamic Identity," for a discussion of the Trika.

82. André Padoux, *Recherches sur la Symbolique et l'Énergie de la Parole*,

Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 21 (Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard, 1963), p. 62 (hereafter cited as Padoux, *Recherches*).

83. Hélène Brunner, "Un Tantra du Nord: Le *Netra Tantra*," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 61 (1974): 125-197.

84. Lilian Silburn, trans., *Le "Vijñāna Bhairava,"* Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 15 (Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard, 1961), p. 7; Abhinavagupta, *ĪPvv*, chap. 2, p. 405.

85. Silburn, *Le "Vijñāna Bhairava,"* verse 161, p. 172.

86. *Mālinīvijayottara Tantram*, ed. Madhusūdan Kaul, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 37 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir States, 1922), 3.35-40, p. 18 (hereafter cited as *MVT*); Padoux, *Recherches*, pp. 132, 254.

87. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 1.16-18.

88. Lilian Silburn, trans., *Le "Paramārthasāra,"* Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 5 (Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard, 1957), p. 7.

89. *Rājataraṅgiṇī* 5.66, cited in S. C. Ray, *Early History and Culture of Kashmir*, 2d ed. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1970), p. 58.

90. See Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 155; Jaideva Singh, trans., *Spanda Kārikās: The Divine Creative Pulsation* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), p. xiv.

91. On the Spanda branch see Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration*.

92. Abhinavagupta, *ĪPv* 4.1.16, vol. 2, p. 271. See also Padoux' article s.v. "Pratyabhijñā" in *TER*.

93. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 137.

94. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 278.

95. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 37.33-85.

96. See also Rastogi's detailed rehearsal of the known facts about Abhinavagupta in his Introduction to the new publication of the *TĀ*. Sanderson variously suggests as dates for Abhinavagupta either 975-1050 (in his *BSOAS* review of Bhatt [see chap. 1, note 62 above]) or 975-1025 (in his article s.v. "Abhinavagupta" in *TER*).

97. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 12.

98. Ibid., p. 475.

99. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 37.62.

100. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 20; Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, p. 38.

101. Translated by Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, pp. 38-39.

102. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 28.

103. Ibid., p. 41.

104. Gnoli, *LDSS*, p. 56.

105. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 30-43.

106. K. C. Pandey, trans., *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, vol. 3, *Bhāskarī*, ed. Tribhuvan Prasad Upadhyaya (Lucknow: Princess of Wales Saraswati Bhavana Texts, 1954), (hereafter cited as Pandey, *Bhāskarī*).

107. A translation of the *PTv* into English has been completed by Thakur Jaideva Singh in consultation with Brahmacari Lakṣman Joo. It should be published in India soon.

108. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 24.

109. See Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, Appendix C, pp. 943-956 for the Sanskrit text of some of these *stotra*-s. See also an excellent study of these short works in Silburn's *Hymnes de Abhinavagupta*.

110. Alper, ed., "Understanding Mantras," p. 392.

111. See Kees W. Bolle, *The Persistence of Religion*, Studies in the History of Religions, no. 8 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965).

112. For full citations of all books listed in this section please see the bibliography.

113. See Padoux, *Recherches*, pp. 42-53 and also the modifications to the positions he takes there, in the introduction to the second edition.

114. See Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 200; Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 42; Gupta, Hoens, and Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism*, p. 5.

115. Note on the use of the term *Hinduism:* Of course the term is not exact, but it is a convenient label that includes the orthodox brahmanical groups, developing sectarian movements, philosophical schools, and diverse ascetic and *yogin* groups.

116. See article by Chintaharan Chakravarti, "Antiquity of Tāntricism," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 6 (1930): 114-126.

117. See Padoux's discussion in *TER*, s.v. "Tantrism."

118. Gupta, Hoens, and Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism*, p. 5.

119. Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 42.

120. Ernest A. Payne, *The Śāktas*, Religious Life of India Series (Calcutta: YMCA Publishing House, 1933; reprint, New York: Garland Publishing, 1979), p. 72. See also chap. 1, note 60, above.

121. Gupta, Hoens, and Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism*, p. 11.

122. Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 44.

123. Gupta, Hoens, and Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism*, p. 32.

124. Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 45.

125. Ibid.

126. Quoted in Padoux, *Recherches*, Introduction to the 2d ed., pp. 1-7.

127. Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1975), p. 199.

128. Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 47.

129. See an interesting recent study by Mary Scott, *Kundalini in the Physical World* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983).

130. Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition*, p. 199.

131. *Yoga-sūtra*, chap. 3; *Haṭha-yoga-pradīpika; Śiva-saṃhitā.*

132. See Padoux, *Recherches*. The entire book is an exhaustive exploration of this theme.

133. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 234.

134. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 29.1.

135. See Nik Douglas and Penny Slinger, *Sexual Secrets* (New York: Destiny Books, 1979).

136. See Vātsyāyana, *"Kāma Sūtra": The Hindu Ritual of Love* (New York: Castle Books, 1963).

137. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ*, chap. 29. The veiled references here make it very difficult to interpret what level is being talked about. See chap. 1 of this study, Limitations and Difficulties.

138. See A. L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India* (New York: Grove Press, 1959), p. 172.

139. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 204.

140. Padoux, *Recherches*, Introduction to the 2d ed., pp. 1-7.

141. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 304.

142. Alper, "Śiva," note 3, p. 387.

143. Goudriaan and Gupta, *HTŚL*, p. 18.

144. Sanderson, "Purity and Power."

145. Gupta, Hoens, and Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism*, p. 23.

146. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 37.13b.

147. Ibid., 36.13.

148. Ibid. 1.31, commentary by Jayaratha.

149. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 604.

150. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 1.7, 26.71, 29.29.

151. P. C. Bagchi, "Evolution of the Tantras," in *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. 4, *The Religions*, ed. Haridas Bhattacharyya (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1956), p. 223.

152. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 29.29, and commentary.

153. See on this Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.263b-270a, 29.29b-45a.

154. See Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 582.

155. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 29.88, and commentary.

156. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 550-578. Pandey considers that the *NṢA* and *YH* together form the *VMT*, but see Padoux's criticism of this view in his article in *Bulletin d'Etudes Indiennes* 1 (1983).

157. Ibid., p. 569.

158. Silburn, *LMDM*, p. 14.

159. For more specific information on the Kaula lineage the reader is referred to Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration*, and to the various important articles by Sanderson already referred to. Sanderson is at present *the* scholar who is most knowledgeable on the subject.

160. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 594-597.

161. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 138, cited in Gnoli, *LDSS*, pp. 863-866.

162. Philip Rawson, *The Art of Tantra* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), p. 10.

163. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 12.6-7:

evam viśvādhvasampūrnam kālavyāpāracitritam

deśakālamayaspandasadma dehaṃ vilokayet

tathā vilokyamāno 'sau viśvāntardevatāmayaḥ

dhyeyaḥ pūjyaśca tarpyaśca tadāviṣṭo vimucyate.

164. Ibid. 32.21b:

mantraikaniṣṭhaḥ saṃpaśyan dehasthāḥ sarvadevatāḥ.

165. Ibid. 1.233:

samyagjñānaṃ ca muktyekakāraṇaṃ svaparasthitam

yato hi kalpanāmātraṃ svaparādivibhūtayaḥ.

166. Ibid. 28.194:

guroḥ patnī tathā bhrātā putra ityādiko guṇaḥ
na yonisaṃbandhavaśādvidyāsambandhajas tu saḥ.

167. Ibid. 28.373-380:

saṃvitsarvātmikā dehabhedādyā saṅkucettu sā
melake 'nyonyasaṅghaṭṭapratibimbādvikasvarā
ucchalannijaraśmyoghaḥ saṃvitsu pratibimbitaḥ
bahudarpaṇavaddīptaḥ sarvāyetāpyayatnataḥ
ata eva gītagītaprabhṛtau bahuparṣadi
yaḥ sarvatanmayībhāve hlādo natvekakasya saḥ
ānandanirbharā saṃvitpratyekaṃ sā tathaikatām
nṛttādau viṣaye prāptā pūrṇānandatvamaśnute
īrṣyāsūyādisaṅkocakāraṇābhāvato'tra sā
vikasvarā niṣpratighaṃ saṃvidānandayoginī
atanmaye tu kasmiṃścittatrasthe pratihanyate
sthapuṭasparśavatsaṃvidvijātīyatayā sthite
ataścakrārcanādyeṣu vijātīyamatanmayam
naiva praveśayetsaṃvitsaṅkocananibandhanam
yāvantyeva śarīrāṇī svāṅgavatsyuḥ sunirbharām.

168. For more on *TĀ* 29 one should look at Silburn, *La Kuṇḍalinī ou L'Énergie des profondeurs* (Paris: Les Deux Océans, 1983).

169. See Padoux, *Recherches*, chap. 5.

170. See Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 1.

171. See Gnoli, *LDSS*, pp. 863-867.

3. The Symbol of the Heart in India Prior to Abhinavagupta

1. A good place to start is the bibliography in O'Flaherty, *Hindu Myths*, pp. 302-312. See also her approximate dates given on pp. 17-18.

2. Jan Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets* (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1963), p. 276 (hereafter cited as Gonda, *Vision*).

3. Hermann Grassmann, *Worterbuch zum Rigveda* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1955), pp. 1678-1679.

4. Gonda, *Vision*, p. 276.

5. Ibid., p. 276.

6. Ibid., p. 277.

7. Ibid., p. 278.

8. Ibid., p. 278.

9. Ibid., p. 279.

10. Ibid., p. 279.

11. Ibid., p. 280.

12. Ibid., p. 281.

13. Ibid., p. 281.

14. Ibid., p. 282.

15. Ibid., p. 282.

16. *Ṛg Veda* (hereafter cited as *RV*) 10.129.4, cited in trans. Wendy O'Flaherty, *The Rig Veda, An Anthology* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 25.

17. *RV* 9.4.5,7, trans. H. H. Wilson, *Translations of the Ṛg Veda Saṃhitā*, 6 vols., (London, 1850-1888), vol. 5, pp. 270-271.

18. *RV* 4.58.6,11, trans. O'Flaherty, p. 127.

19. Ibid., 1.179.5, p. 251.

20. *RV* 9.4.6-8, trans. Wilson, p. 271.

21. *Atharva Veda* 9.7, cited in Georg Feuerstein, *Textbook of Yoga* (London: Rider and Company, 1975), p. 45.

22. The heart occupies an important place in our text which is thus situated within the line of the principal Upanishads. The heart is an organ and at the same time a function or, if one prefers, a place (the secret cavern) and an activity (intuition). The presentation of the heart as the abode of the soul (individual and cosmic, *ātman* and *brahman*) is, if we may say so, commonplace in this type of text. The second aspect of the word *hṛd* cannot help but evoke certain yogic practices: those that lead the adept to see his soul in the fire that illuminates the cavern of the heart. [author's translation] Jean Varenne, *Le Mahā Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1960), vol. 1, pp. 59, 62, quoted in Gonda, *Vision*, p. 288.

23. *Bṛhad-Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (hereafter cited as *BĀU*) 2.1.17-19, p. 95.

24. Ibid. 2.4.11, p. 101.

25. Ibid. 4.1.7, p. 130.

26. Ibid. 4.2.3, p. 132.

27. Ibid. 4.3.7, p. 134.

28. Ibid. 4.4.1-2, p. 139.

29. Ibid. 5.3.1, pp. 150-151.

30. Ibid. 5.6.1, pp. 152.

31. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 3.12.4, p. 207 (hereafter cited as *ChU*).

32. Ibid. 3.12.7-9, p. 208.

33. Ibid. 3.13.1, p. 208.

34. Ibid. 3.14.2-3, p. 210.

35. Ibid. 8.1.1-4, pp. 262-263.

36. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (hereafter cited as *Kaṭha*) 6.6-9, p. 359.

37. Ibid. 6.9, p. 359.

38. *Śvet.* 4.17, p. 405.

39. *Kaṭha* 6.16-17, p. 361.

40. *Śvet.* 3.20, p. 402.

41. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 1.6.1, p. 278.

42. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 2.2.8, p. 373.

43. *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (hereafter cited as *Mai.*) 6.18, p. 435.

44. Ibid. 7.5, p. 454.

45. Ibid. 6.22, p. 437.

46. Ibid. 6.26, p. 440.

47. *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* 13.6-12, Swāmī Vimalānanda, trans., *Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad* (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1979), pp. 161-169.

48. *Bhagavad-gītā* 15.15, R. C. Zaehner, trans., *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, (reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 366.

49. Ibid. 18.61, p. 399.

50. *Yoga-sūtra* 3.34, translated in Swāmi Hariharānanda Āraṇya, *Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali*, trans. P. N. Mukherji, rev. ed. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), p. 309.

51. Ibid., p. 82.

52. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 71.

53. Hariharānanda Āraṇya, *Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali*, pp. 249-250.

54. *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* 4.11.17, in Swami Gambhirananda, trans., *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya*, 2d ed., (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972), p. 864.

55. Karl H. Potter, "Karma Theory in Some Indian Philosophical Systems," in *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions*, ed. Wendy D. O'Flaherty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 250.

56. Eliade, *Yoga*, p. 242.

57. See P. H. Pott, *Yoga and Yantra* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), p. 15; Shyam Sundar Goswami, *Layayoga* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), pp. 212-225.

58. "Dhyānabindu Upaniṣad," unpublished translation by R. N. Mukerji, Department of Philosophy, Benares Hindu University.

59. Rai Bahadur Srisa Chandra Vasu, *The Gheraṇḍa Saṃhitā*, 2d ed. (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1975), pp. 52-53.

60. Idem, *The Śiva Saṃhitā*, 2d ed. (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1975), pp. 67-68.

61. Gonda, *Vision*, p. 285.

62. Jaideva Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, pp. 58-60.

63. This is a somewhat adapted version of the translation of the *ĪPK* 1.5.11-14 and Abhinavagupta's comment on verse 14 as given by K. C. Pandey, *Bhāskarī*, pp. 70-76:

svabhāvamavabhāsasya vimarśaṃ viduranyathā

prakāśo 'rthāparakto 'pi sphaṭikādijaḍopamaḥ.

ātmāta eva caitanyaṃ citkriyā citikartṛtā

tātparyeṇoditastena jaḍātsa hi vilakṣaṇaḥ.

citiḥ pratyavamarśātmā parā vāksvarasoditā

svātantryametanmukhyaṃ tadaiśvaryaṃ paramātmanaḥ.

sā sphurattā mahāsattā deśakālāviśeṣiṇī

saiṣā sāratayā proktā hṛdayaṃ parameṣṭhinaḥ.

portion of comment on 14:

hṛdayaṃ ca nāma pratiṣṭhāsthānamucyate, tacca uktanītyā jaḍānāṃ cetanaṃ, tasyāpi prakāśātmatvaṃ, tasyāpi vimarśaśaktiḥ iti viśvasya parame pade tiṣṭhato viśrāntasya idameva hṛdayaṃ vimarśarūpaṃ paramantrātmakaṃ tatra abhidhīyate. sarvasya hi mantra eva hṛdayam, mantraśca vimarśanātmā, vimarśanaṃ ca parāvākchaktimayam.

64. *Śiva-dṛṣṭi* 1.1-11a, as translated by Raniero Gnoli, trans. and commentary, "*Śivadṛṣṭi* by Somānanda," *East and West* 8 (1957): 19.

65. See Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 51.

4. The Heart as Ultimate Reality

1. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 1.52-62, 5.22-25a.

2. Ibid. 5.44-62a.

3. Ibid. 4.181b-193.

4. Abhinavagupta, *Parātrīśikā Laghuvṛtti*, ed. Jagaddhara Zādoo, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 68 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir Government, 1947), verse 9b and commentary, pp. 9-10 (hereafter cited as Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*).

5. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 1.167-170, 4.184-186b.

6. Ibid. 15.262b-268a.

7. Ibid. 29.140-141a.

8. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 3-6; *ŚSv* 2.3, cited in Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 89-93.

9. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 23.31-41, 4.181b-193.

10. Ibid. 5.140-145.

11. Ibid. 5.98-100a.

12. This reality which eludes precise definition and does not contain any of the customary modes of consciousness is here called Bhairava, brahmic existence, heart (*hṛdaya*), ambrosia (*amṛta*), ultimate reality (*tattva* or *mahāsattā*), essence (*svarūpa*), Self (*ātman*), emptiness (*śūnyatā*). It remains essentially ineffable and it matters little whether it be termed fulfillment or emptiness, because all words necessarily lose their normal meaning when they are applied to the contents of mystical experience. Because of its infinite simplicity, one cannot imagine it, think about it, nor suggest it; consequently one must experience it for oneself. [author's translation] Silburn, *Le Vijñāna Bhairava*, p. 11.

13. Abhinavagupta, *The Tantrasāra*, ed. Mukunda Rāma, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 17 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1918), chap. 4, line 1, p. 27 (hereafter cited as Abhinavagupta, *TS*):

    tatra parameśvaraḥ pūrṇasaṃvitsvabhāvaḥ, pūrṇataiva asya śaktiḥ, kulaṃ sāmarthyaṃ ūrmiḥ hṛdayaṃ sāraṃ spandaḥ vibhūtiḥ trīśikā kālī karṣaṇī caṇḍī vāṇī bhogo dṛk nityā ityādibhiḥ āgamabhāṣābhiḥ tattadanvarthapravṛttābhiḥ abhidhīyate.

14. *Spanda-kārikā* 3.12, translated in Jaideva Singh, *Spanda Kārikās: The Divine Creative Pulsation*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), p. 155.

15. Kṣhemarāja, *The Parā Prāveshikā*, ed. Mukunda Rāma, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 15 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1918), pp. 1-3 (hereafter cited as Kṣemarāja, *PP*):

viśvātmakaṃ taduttīrṇāṃ

hṛdayaṃ parameśitur

parādiśaktirūpeṇa

sphurantīṃ saṃvidaṃ namaḥ.

iha khalu parameśvaraḥ prakāśātmā, prakāśaś ca vimarśasvabhāvaḥ, vimarśo nāma viśvakāreṇa viśvaprakāśena viśvasaṃhareṇa ca akṛtrimāham iti visphuraṇam. yadi nirvimarśaḥ syāt anīśvaro jaḍaś ca prasajyet. eṣa eva ca vimarśaḥ—cit, caitanyaṃ, svarasoditā parāvāk, svātantryaṃ, paramātmano, mukhyam, aiśvaryaṃ, kartṛtvaṃ, sphurattā, sāro, hṛdayaṃ, spandaḥ, ityādiśabdair agameṣūdghoṣyate, ata eva akṛtrimāhamiti-satattvaḥ svayaṃprakāśarūpaḥ parameśvaraḥ pārameśvaryā śaktyā śivādi-dharaṇyantajagadātmanā sphurati prakāśate ca.

16. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.200b-201a:

itthaṃ nādānuvedhena parāmarśasvabhāvakaḥ

Śivo mātāpitṛtvena kartā viśvatra saṃsthitaḥ.

17. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, comment on verses 5-8, pp. 142-143:

iti cet tarhi akālakalite saṃvidātmani sattaviśvaśaktyaviyukte svātantryavaśasaṃkocavikāsāvabhāsitasaṃhṛtisṛṣṭiśatāvirūdhaikarūpatadātmakavapuṣi parameśvare'smajjihvāgrahahṛdayānapāyini bhairavabhaṭṭārake sarvamasti. tasmāt śivatattvamidam anādyantaṃ svayaṃ prathamānaṃ pūrṇatātmakanirapekṣatāmātrasatattvasvātantryasāram antaḥkroḍīkṛtyātmataikaparamārthaṃ.

18. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 15.264b-266:

na khalveṣa śivaḥ śānto nāma kaścidvibhedavān

sarvetarādhvavyāvṛtto ghaṭatulyo 'sti kutracit

mahāprakāśarūpā hi yeyaṃ saṃvidvijṛmbhate

sa śivaḥ śivataivāsya vaiśvarūpyāvabhāsitā

tathābhāsanayogo 'taḥ svarasenāsya jṛmbhate.

19. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, comment on verse 1, p. 3:

parameśvaraḥ pañcavidhakṛtyamayaḥ, satatam anugrahamayyā pararūpayā śaktyā ākrānto vastuto anugrahaikātmaiva, nahi śaktiḥ śivāt bhedam āmarśayet.

20. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, introductory verses, pp. 1-3;

vimalakalāśrayābhinavasṛṣṭimahā jananī

bharitatanuśca pañcamukhagupta rucirjanakaḥ

tadubhayayāmalasphuritabhāvavisargamayaṃ

hṛdayamanuttarāmṛtakulam mama saṃsphuratāt

yasyāmantarviśvam etad vibhāti
bāhyābhāsaṃ bhāsamānaṃ visṛṣṭau
kṣobhe kṣoṇe 'nuttarāyāṃ sthitau tāṃ
vande devīṃ svātmasaṃvittim ekām

naraśaktiśivātmakaṃ trikaṃ
hṛdaye yā vinidhāya bhāsayet
praṇamāmi parām anuttarāṃ
nijabhāsāṃ pratibhācamatkṛtim

jayaty anarghamahimā vipāśitapaśuvrajaḥ
śrīmānādyaguruḥ śaṃbhuḥ śrīkaṇṭhaḥ parameśvaraḥ.

Jayaratha comments extensively on verse 1 in the comment to the *TĀ*, see Abhinavagupta, *TĀ*, pp. 1-16.

21. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 9, p. 10:

bho bhagavati suśroṇi! viśrāntaparamānandamayadhāmaśaktitrayagatānavaratasaṅkocavikāsarūpatrikoṇaparispandanarūpam etad hṛdayaṃ bhairavātmano bhairavasya ātmabhūtatāyās tadavibhāgamayyāḥ bhagavatyāḥ śrīparādevyāḥ tattvaṃ bhavati.

The major sections of the *PTlv* (the primary textual basis of this study) that deal with the Heart are: comment on verses 2b-3a; comment on 9; comment on 11-16; comment on 25; comment on 29-32; comment on 34.

22. On the term *anuttara*, the reader may profitably examine Abhinavagupta's *Anuttarāṣṭikā* in Silburn, *Hymnes de Abhinavagupta*, pp. 56-64, which includes as well Silburn's analysis of the term drawn from *PTv*, pp. 19-25. In addition, Pandey examines the concept in his *Abhinavagupta*, p. 636. Consult also Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 192-198 and his *LPDA*, p. 69, which quotes the *PTv*, p. 19.

23. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.65-69:

itthaṃ viśvam idaṃ nāthe
bhairavīyacidambare
pratibimbamalaṃ svacche
nakhalvanyaprasādataḥ

anayāpekṣitā yāsya
viśvātmatvaṃ prati prabhoḥ
tāṃ parāṃ pratibhāṃ devīṃ
saṃgirante hyanuttarām

akulasyāsya devasya
kulaprathanaśālinī
kaulikī sā parā śaktir
aviyukto yayā prabhuḥ

tayor yadyāmalaṃ rūpaṃ
sa saṃghaṭṭa iti smṛtaḥ
ānandaśaktiḥ saivoktā
yato viśvaṃ visṛjyate

parāparātparaṃ tattvaṃ
saiṣā devī nigadyate
tatsāraṃ tacca hṛdayaṃ
sa visargaḥ paraḥ prabhuḥ.

24. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, introductory verses, p. 1:

yatra tejasi tejāṃsi tamāṃsi ca tamsyalam
tejāṃsi ca tamāṃsy etad vande jyotiranuttaram.
sadābhinavaguptaṃ yat purāṇaṃ ca prasiddhimat
hṛdayaṃ tatparollāsaiḥ svayaṃ sphūrjaty anuttaram.

25. Ibid., comment on verse 1, pp. 1-2:

he svātmarūpa deva sarvatra jñāne karaṇe ca prathamam abhimukhībhūta, tava tāvad anuttaraṃ rūpam uttaram utkṛṣṭam uparivarti, tacca jaḍāpekṣayā grāhakarūpam. tasya tu cidātmanaḥ svaprakāśasya na grāhakāntaram astīti anuttaratvam. tena anuttaraṃ saṃvidrūpaṃ sadā sarvatrāvabhāsitaṃ pūrvāparadeśakālavihīnam anapahnavanīyam, kiṃ tatrocyatām.

26. Ibid., comment on verse 9, pp. 9-10.

27. Ibid., comment on verses 5-9a, pp. 8-9.

eṣā ca sā trividhā sṛṣṭir akāramūlā kṣakāraparyantā anuttararūpāt prabhṛti punar api śivātmany eva viśrāntidvāreṇa tatraivānuttaradhāmni kramaṇaṃ yasyāḥ sā tathābhūtā udāhṛtā jñeyā satī. anayābhijñātayā tadanuttaraspandasvarūpaṃ suṣṭhu jñātaṃ bhavati. iyat kila kim tadanuttaram iti yāvat. evaṃ hṛdayasthā pūrvam avibhāgaparāmarśarūpā śaktiḥ sa vibhāgaparāmarśarūpatāṃ kaulikasiddhirūpatām anena anuttararūpasvātantryeṇa eva pratipadyate iti nirṇītaṃ śivarudrarahasyāditantreṣu.

28. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 19-25.

29. *The Vijñāna-Bhairava*, with commentaries by Kṣemarāja and Shivopādhyaya, ed. Mukunda Rāma, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 8 (Srinagar:

Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1918), verse 26, p. 24 (hereafter cited as *V. Bh.*):

na vrajenna viśecchaktir marudrūpā vikāsite

nirvikalpatayā madhye tayā bhairavarūpatā.

The identification of the center and the Heart, which is in any case fairly clear, is made explicit in Silburn, *LMDM*, verse 56, pp. 163-164 and p. 191, which also refers to the sun and moon:

yadi nijahṛdayollāsaṃ nirṇetuṃ nityaniṣkalam icchā

madhyatuṭis truṭitavyāstaṅgatayoḥ somasūryayoḥ.

Abhinavagupta makes numerous references to *madhya*, quoting, for example, a text known as the *Trikasāra* in *TĀ* 3.253b-254a as follows: "In the center one should adore the supreme single syllable manifesting itself in the form of Bhairava surrounded by the twelve *yoginī*-s."

30. *V. Bh.*, verse 35, p. 30:

madhyanāḍī madhyasaṃsthā bisasūtrābharūpatayā

dhyātāntarvyomayā devyā tayā devaḥ prakāśate.

31. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.86. The yogic meaning of the center is brought out in many places. Kṣemarāja comments on it in *Śiva-sūtra* 3.5, cited in Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 139, where he quotes the *Svacchanda Tantra*.

32. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.54.

33. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 49-50:

yadā sakalendriyanāḍībhūtamarudādiparipūraṇe tu mahāmadhyamasauṣumnapadānupraveśe nijaśaktikṣobhatādātmyaṃ pratipadyate tadā sarvatodvaitagalane paripūrṇasvaśaktibharavimarśāhantāmayacamatkārānupraveśe—paripūrṇasṛṣṭyānandarūparudrayāmalayogānupraveśena tanmahāmantravīryavisargaviśleṣaṇātmanā dhruvapadātmakanistaraṅgākulabhairavabhāvābhivyaktiḥ.

34. *V. Bh.*, verse 61, p. 50:

ubhayorbhāvayor jñāne jñātvā (dhyātvā) madhyaṃ samāśrayet

yugapacca dvayaṃ tyaktvā madhye tattvaṃ prakāśate.

35. Ibid., verse 62, p. 62:

bhāve nyakte niruddhā cit naiva bhāvāntaraṃ vrajet

tadā tanmadhyabhāvena vikasaty ati bhāvanā.

36. Kṣemarāja, *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, ed. Mukunda Rāma, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 3 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1918), *sūtra* 17:

madhyavikāsāccidānandalābhaḥ.

Kṣemarāja continues on this same theme in the commentary on *sūtra* 18 where he also refers repeatedly to the Heart.

37. Ibid., comment on *sūtra* 17:

sarvāntaratamatvena vartamānatvāt tadbhittilagnatāṃ vinā ca

kasyacit api svarūpānupapatteḥ saṃvideva bhagavatī madhyam.

38. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 61.

39. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, end of comment on verse 9, p. 10:

anuttararūpā saṃvid anena tāvad bījātmanā spandena prathamasvara-koṭyoḥ svarūpaviśrāntitattvayo parispandate. tatspandanaprabhāvād eva ca madhyakoṭau vibhaktaparāmarśātmanā sṛṣṭirūpeṇa samastatattvamayīti.

40. *V. Bh.*, verse 68, p. 57:

vahnerviṣasya madhye tu cittaṃ sukhamayaṃ kṣipet

kevalaṃ vāyupūrṇaṃ vā smarānandena yujyet.

41. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.105-123a, 3.171.

42. See Silburn, *Le Vijñāna Bhairava*, p. 109-111.

43. *V. Bh.*, verse 103, p. 88.

44. Ibid., verse 126, pp. 109-110.

45. One cannot examine the procedures which serve to open the Center without having previously defined the Center itself. Strictly translated, *madhya* is the middle or interval, but in the *Vijñānabhairava* where it forms the master hinge this term is full of meaning; not to understand it would be to give up all attempts to understand this Tantra. Yet how can the simple and profound attitude that it implies be ascertained? Seen from the point of view of *yoga*, *madhya* may be conceived as the point of intersection between two rhythms, two states, or two things; fulfillment as well as junction, it becomes a fissure or interstitial void if one considers it as the interval which separates them. The *yogin* constantly attempts to center his attention on the junction of his choice: a junction which can be linked to two breaths, two sounds, two movements in order to discover the exact balance point, the real and only place of repose. From that moment on, he starts to live anchored to the central point (the Heart), remaining always imperturbable at the junction point, his most significant acts and thoughts impregnated with the profound meaning that he there discovers. [author's translation] Silburn, *Le Vijñāna Bhairava*, p. 35.

46. Kṣemarāja, *PP*, comment on verse 1, pp. 1-3. The full Sanskrit reference has been given in note 15 above.

47. See the first verse of Kṣemarāja's *PP*.

48. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 29-32, p. 22:

yena madhyavartivisarga ubhayakoṭigatasvarasadvṛttisparśī, sarvātītarūpam ata eva sarvatattvamayīṃ sarvaiś ca avayavāyamānair bhāvarāśibhir yuktaṃ maheśānasya parabhairavasya abhedena vartamānāṃ śrīparadevatām anuttarasvarūpāṃ svīkaroti.

49. Abhinavagupta, *ĪPv*, 1:205:

vimarśo hi sarvaṃsahaḥ paramapi ātmīkarotīti, ātmānaṃ ca parīkaroti, ubhayam ekīkaroti, ekīkṛtaṃ dvayamapi nyagbhāvayati ityevaṃ-svabhāvaḥ.

50. Abhinavagupta, *Mālinī-vijaya-vārtika* (*MVv*), ed. Madhusudan Kaul, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 31 (Srinagar: Research Department, Jammu and Kashmir State, 1921), 1.620b-630, pp. 57-58:

prakāśa eka evāyaṃ yaścirānna vibhidyate
ata eva hi bhedo 'sti na kaścidyo maheśvaram
advayaṃ saṃprabhindīta prakāśānandasundaram
deśakālākṛtijñānadharmopādhyantarādayaḥ
saṃmatā bhedakatvena bhānti cetsā vibhā tathā
na cedvibhaiva sā tādṛktadadvaitamidaṃ sphuṭam
bheda ityeṣa śabdastu kevalaṃ pratibhojjhitaḥ
astu vā bhedakalanā pratibhāsaṃprarohiṇī
uktanītyā tu tatraiva sapratiṣṭhā bhaviṣyati
ayaṃ ghaṭaḥ paṭaścāyaṃ tāvanyonyavibhedinau
pramātrantarabhinnau ca tau matto 'pi vibhedinau
iti prakāśa eko 'yaṃ tathāmarśasvarūpakaḥ
nanvevaṃ pakṣapāto 'yamadvaitaṃ bhavatāṃ katham
bhedo 'pyastu sa āhatya kiṃ nāma na viṣahyate
seyaṃ badhiragoṣṭhīṣu gītavādyaprarocanā
nahyadvayaṃ dvayāveśabādhenāsmābhir ucyate
tvatpakṣopagamo hyeṣa syāddvayaṃ taddhi susphuṭam
idaṃ dvaitamidaṃ neti tadidaṃ ca dvayādvayam
iti yatra samaṃ bhāti tadadvayam udāhṛtam
nanvitthamastu bhedo'pi na vayaṃ śabdakāmukāḥ
astvasau na hi no heyamādeyaṃ vā yathātra vaḥ.

51. See Kupetz, "The Non-Dualistic Philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism," pp. 109-114.

52. Alper, "Śiva," p. 377.

53. Ibid., p. 374.

54. Ibid., p. 383.

55. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 133:

atra tu parasaṃvidi yathaiva bhāsā tathaiva vyavahāramayo 'pi vimarśaḥ, tena—jala iva jalaṃ jvālāyāmiva jvālā sarvathā abhedamayā eva bhāvā bhāsante.

56. Abhinavagupta, *Ptv*, p. 90:

prathamata eva tathā vimarśajīvataprakāśamayatvameva sattvaṃ, tat ca svātantryavimarśasārāhaṃbhāvabharitam iti bhairavarūpam eva.

57. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 9, p. 9:

yathā hi sarvatattvamayaśarīrasya vibhaktatvagādisantānatantritasya tadavibhāgaprakāśavimarśaviśrāntidhāma hṛdayapadam ucyate, tathaiva bhagavato bhairavanāthasya tad idaṃ vibhaktatattvabhuvanādimayaṃ viśvarūpaṃ parāmarśasāraṃ pañcāśadvarṇamayaṃ śarīraṃ tasya tadavibhāga-parāmarśasāraṃ idaṃ hṛdayam.

See also Ibid., comment on 21-24 where the *śakti* is spoken of as *prakāśa-vimarśa;* see also Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.1, on *prakāśa-vimarśa*

58. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 1.212:

nirmale hṛdaya prāgryasphuradbhūmyaṃśabhāsini

prakāśe tanmukhenaiva saṃvitparaśivātmatā.

59. Silburn, *LMDM*, verse 11, pp. 95, 188:

san hṛdayaprakāśo bhavanasya kriyāyāṃ bhavati kartā

saiva kriyā vimarśaḥ svasthā kṣubhitā ca viśvavistāraḥ.

There are many other important verses in the *Mahārtha-mañjarī*. Although it is a later text, dated perhaps in the twelfth century, it very clearly conserves traces of the Kaula symbolism. See in the *MM* verses 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 21, 22, 56, 62, 63.

5. The Heart as Embodied Cosmos: *Kula*

1. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, introductory verse 1. For the Sanskrit of this verse see chap. 4, note 20, above.

2. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 29.4:

kulaṃ ca parameśasya śaktiḥ sāmarthyamūrdhvatā

svātantryamojo vīryaṃ ca piṇḍaḥ saṃviccharīrakam.

Also see Gnoli, *LDSS*, pp. 857-867, who translates sections of the *PTv* that document clearly the idea of "encapsulation."

3. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 32-33:

kulaṃ sthūlasūkṣmaparaprāṇendriyabhūtādi—samūhātmatayā kāryakāraṇa-bhāvāt ca. tathā kulaṃ bodhasyaiva āśyānarūpatayā yathāvasthānāt bodha-svātantryādeva ca asya bandhābhimānāt. uktaṃ hi 'kula saṃstyāne bandhuṣu ca'.

4. Ibid. See also Padoux, *Recherches*, note 1, p. 201, which refers on the notion of "coagulation," *ghana, ghanatā* to Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 64, 66, 166-7, 170; Padoux also refers on p. 70 to the terms for thickening, coagulation, *ghanatā, śyānatā, āśyānatā, styānibhāva.*

5. See Gnoli, *LDSS*, note 1, p. 680.

6. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 61, line 5, beginning of commentary on verse 2:

sarvasya nīlasukhādeḥ dehaprāṇabuddhyādeśca paraṃ pratiṣṭhāsthānaṃ saṃvidātma hṛt, tasyaiva nijasvātantryakalpitabhedā ayā—vicitrāṇi ghaṭādi-jñānāni, tatsthā iyaṃ sphuraṇamayī śaktiḥ, kulasya nāyikā śarīraprāṇa-sukhādeḥ sphurattādāyinī, brāhmyādidevatācakrasya vīryabhūtā, nikhilākṣa-nāḍīcakrasya madhya-madhyama rūpā jananasthānakarṇikāliṅgātmā asti. tatraiva ca kule bhavā kularūpā kaulikī, yadvā kule bhavam akulātma kaulaṃ tat yasyām antaḥ tādātmyena asti sā kaulikī, kulaṃ akulaprakāśarūḍhameva tathā bhavati.

7. See Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 195, for a reference to a similar usage in *a-varṇa.*

8. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.143:

anuttaraṃ paraṃ dhāma tadevākulamucyate

visargastasya nāthasya kaulikī śaktirucyate.

9. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.66-67. See note 23, chap. 4 for Sanskrit of these verses.

10. The terms *kula* and *akula*, when they are applied to the energy, indicate it in its highest form, inseparable from Śiva, the pure energy of consciousness, *citśakti*. The energy of *kula* is characteristic of the category of complete supreme consciousness (*pūrṇaparasamvittattvalakṣaṇa*) where the universes appear and disappear and it arises from *akula* which is the same energy, but considered from a point of view in which transcendence is more vividly affirmed. [author's translation] Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 195.

11. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 61 and *PTlv*, p. 2.

12. See Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 20, p. 18.

13. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 2b-3a, p. 3:

hṛdayasthā hṛdaye saṃvidrūpe sthitā yā svātantryalakṣaṇā śaktir yasyāḥ kulaṃ grāhyagrāhakagrahaṇacakraṃ nirmeyatvena prayojanaṃ tata eva ca kaulinī. tasya ca nirmitasya kulasya nāyikā sā adhiṣṭhātrī, tadvedanena tadavabhāsanakartrī ca tatsvarūpasaṃhartrī ca. tāṃ me kathaya paramārśa-padavīṃ naya yena parāmṛśyatānayanena tṛptiṃ bhuktimuktirūpāṃ vrajāmy aham iti sarvaprāṇisaṃvedanarūpām.

14. See Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 2b-3a, pp. 2-3.

15. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 1, p. 2:

kathaṃ kena prakāreṇa kaulikasya kulasamūhasya dehākṣabhuvanādeḥ

apūrvarūpasya svataḥ svatantrataḥ siddhiṃ ubhayendriyasaṃvedyatayā abhivyaktiṃ dadāti . . . kiṃ ca dhāraṇādikrameṇa prāṇayogādikṛtāḥ siddhayaḥ santi anuttaraṃ saṃvinmātrarūpam akramaṃ kathaṃ kaulikasiddhiṃ sakramāṃ dadāti yena jñātamātreṇa devīrūpatvaṃ vrajet.

16. Ibid., verses 3b-4 and comment, pp. 3-4:

Śrībhairava uvāca:

śṛṇu devi mahābhāge uttarasyāpyanuttaram

kathayāmi na sandehaḥ sadyaḥ kaulikasiddhidam

kauliko'yaṃ vidhirdevi mam hṛdvyomnyavasthitaḥ.

kaulikasiddhidaṃ viśvāvabhāsakādi bhogāpavargatṛptiprayojanaṃ ca. tat kathayāmi tac ca hṛdayaṅgamatāṃ nayāmi. yathā sadya eva avadhāraṇamātre saṃpanne eva punar atra sandeho na bhavati. yasmāt ayam iti sarvasya bhāsamāno. yaḥ kauliko vidhiḥ sa mama hṛdayākāśe hṛdayatvena ca sadā viditaḥ san cidātmanā tāvad āste.

17. Ibid., comment on verses 5-9a, p. 5:

evam kauliko vidhir mama tāvad hṛdi saṃvidrūpatādātmyenāvasthitaḥ san athāntaram idaṃparāmarśamahimnā prasarati.

18. Ibid., verses 2b-3a and comment, pp. 2-3.

19. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.888-890; also Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.66-67.

20. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 34-35:

tatra kule bhavā kaulikī siddhiḥ—tathātvadārḍhyaṃ parivṛttya ānandarūpaṃ, hṛdayasvabhāvaparasaṃvidātmakaśivavimarśatādātmyaṃ, tāṃ siddhiṃ dadāti anuttarasvarūpatādātmye hi kulaṃ tathā bhavati . . . yato yāvadidaṃ parameśvarasya bhairavabhānoḥ raśmicakrātmakaṃ nijabhāsāsphāramayaṃ kulamuktam, tat ca etat antarmukhaparabhairavasaṃvittādātmyalakṣaṇaṃ nirodhameti, tadā tadeva paramānandāmṛtāsvādamayamadeśakālakalitam anuttaraṃ dhruvaṃ visargarūpaṃ satatoditaṃ.

21. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment to 5-9a, p. 9. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 4, note 27, above.

22. Ibid., end of comment on verse 10, p. 10:

asminn unmīlite sati anena hṛdayena sahayogaḥ. etad hṛdayalābhaḥ śrībhairavayāmalasamāveśalakṣaṇo jīvata eva vimokṣada iti unmīlanamātre jīvanmuktatālakṣaṇā parā kaulikī siddhir anuttare saṃvinmātrarūpe yathā vidhīyate.

23. Ibid., end of comment on verse 36, pp. 26-27.

24. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 36:

tathā kule śivaśaktyātmani saṃnihite 'pi siddhiruktanayena jīvanmuktatāmayī.

25. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.68:

aṃa iti kuleśvaryā sahito hi kuleśitā.

26. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.68-69. For the Sanskrit to these verses see chap. 4, note 23, above.

27. On *saṃghaṭṭa* see Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, new edition (1899) p. 1130; also Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 278.

28. See Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, introductory verse 1. For the Sanskrit to this verse see chap. 4, note 20, above.

29. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 28.372b-385a; also *TĀ*, chap. 29.

30. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 5:

tena bhairavasaṃghaṭṭaviśramaṇodayaparamārthaśivaśaktisvarūpaṃ rudrayāmalam ucyate.

31. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.121-124:

yoginīhṛdayaṃ liṅgam idam ānandasundaram
bijayonisamāpattyā sūte kāmapi saṃvidam
atra prayāsavirahāt sarvo'sau devatāgaṇaḥ
ānandapūrṇe dhāmnyāste nityoditacidātmakaḥ
atra bhairavanāthasya sasaṃkocavikāsikā
bhāsate durghaṭā śaktir asaṃkocavikāsinaḥ
etalliṅgasamāpattivisargānandadhārayā
siktaṃ tadeva sadviśvaṃ śaśvannavanavāyate.

32. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.113:

atra viśvam idaṃ līnamatrāntaḥsthaṃ ca gamyate
idaṃ tallakṣaṇaṃ pūrṇaśaktibhairavasaṃvidaḥ.

33. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 61. For the Sanskrit to this passage see note 6, above.

34. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 9, pp. 9-10. See chap. 4, note 21, above for the Sanskrit for this passage.

35. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.95a:

trikoṇamiti tatprāhur visargāmodasundaram

36. Ibid., 3.94-95a, comment by Jayaratha:

trikoṇamityanena yoginīvaktrāparaparyāyajanmādhārarūpatvamapyasya sūcitam. tat eva hi parā śaktirudetīti bhāvaḥ, yaduktam:
yadollasati śṛṃgāṭapīṭhātkuṭilarūpiṇi. iti. tathā trikoṇaṃ bhagamityuktaṃ viyatsthaṃ guptamaṇḍalam / icchājñānakriyākoṇaṃ tanmadhye ciñcinī-

kramam. iti. caryākrame'pi hi visargasyānandaphalasya saṃbandhinā sphāreṇa parānandamayaṃ prasarasthānam, iti.

37. R. Gnoli, trans., "*Śivadṛṣṭi* by Somānanda," *East and West* 8 (1957): 19, verse 1.3-4.

38. Abhinavagupta, *TS*, chap. 1, p. 6; see also Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 26-28, which names these as five vibrations.

39. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.192b-193a:

tadeva tritayaṃ prāhurbhairavasya paraṃ mahaḥ

tattrikaṃ parameśasya pūrṇā śaktiḥ pragīyate.

See also *TĀ* 3.220.

40. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, pp. 7-8:

tadevam visargaśaktireva "athādyā" ityādinā "brahmapañcakam" ityantenaiva vapuṣā vikasatīti. tadidaṃ śakticakram avicchinnaprabandhaṃ bhagavato bhairavanāthasya. anuttarecchonmeṣatrikoṇavimarśaśaktayaḥ eva hi pañcabhedavatyaś cidānandecchājñānakriyāśaktayo yo bhūtapañcakaśaktimayyaḥ iti.

41. Ibid., verse 2, p. 2.

42. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 53: mātṛmānameyabhedāvibhāga

43. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 183-184:

tadaiva puṣparūpatvāt, anyadā tu yogyatayaiva tathāvyapadeśaḥ, tathā ca tat kusumameva trikoṇatayā yonirūpaṃ tatsphaṭibhūtavibhaktagrāhyādirūpasomasūryāgnisṛṣṭisthitisaṃhṛti iḍāpiṅgalāsuṣumnādharmādharmśabalādi koṇatritayā pārameśvarī bhairavī bhaṭṭārikā mudrā tadrūpayonyādhāratayā yoniriti nirdiṣṭā, tathā ca śrīkubjikāmate khaṇḍacakravicāre amumevārthaṃ pradhānatayādhikṛtyādiṣṭam:
māyoparimahāmāyā trikoṇānandarūpiṇī.

44. Abhinavagupta *TĀ* 3.104a-105, 108:

asmiṃścaturdaśe dhāmni sphaṭībhūtatriśāktike

triśūlatvamataḥ prāha śāstā śrīpūrvaśāsane

nirañjanamidaṃ coktaṃ gurubhistattvadarśibhiḥ

lolībhūtamataḥ śaktitritayaṃ tattriśūlakam

yasminnāśu samāveśād bhaved yogī nirañjanaḥ.

45. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 9, p. 9:

caturdaśena svareṇa paripūrṇānuttarānandaśālinā saṃpūrṇakriyāśaktiśarīronmeṣonatvasaṃpadākriyāśaktidvārāntarlīnecchājñānaśaktiyugalena.

46. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 21-24, p. 17:

tacchaktisvarūpāt tadabhinnaṃ paramārthata iti śaktisvarūpam evāvaśiṣyate iti. tac ca icchā vā kriyā vā jñānaṃ vā yataḥ sarvaṃ vastu icchāmi karomi jānāmi vā ity evaṃbhūtavimarśaśaktiviśrāntyā vinā na jātu cid avabhāti icchāmītyatra ca śaktitrayanuvedhanam evaṃ jānāmi karomīty atrāviyuktatvād āstām. tena śaktitrayātmakasvarūpaviśrāntaṃ tadavabhāsamānaṃ bhavati. tasyāpi śaktitrayasya ekam eva svatantraṃ svarūpaṃ svātaṃtryād eva. atha adhaūrdhvagranthirūpaṃ bindudvayamayaṃ saṃvidātmakaṃ bhairavadevatātmakaṃ tāttvikaṃvapuḥ.

47. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.191b.

6. The Heart: Vibration and Emissional Power

1. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 6.13:

iyaṃ sā prāṇanāśaktir āntarodyogadohadā

spandaḥ sphurattā viśrāntir jīvo hṛtpratibhā matā.

2. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.181b-186:

parāmarśasvabhāvatvād etasyā yaḥ svayaṃ dhvaniḥ

sadoditaḥ sa evoktaḥ paramaṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat

hṛdaye svavimarśo 'sau drāvitāśeṣaviśvakaḥ

bhāvagrahādiparyantabhāvī sāmānyasaṃjñakaḥ

spandaḥ sa kathyate śāstre svātmany ucchalanātmakaḥ

kiṃciccalanam etāvad ananyasphuraṇaṃ hi yat

ūrmir eṣā vibodhābdher na saṃvid anayā vinā

nistaraṅgataraṅgādivṛtter eva hi sindhutā

sāram etat samastasya yac citsāraṃ jaḍam jagat

tadadhīnapratiṣṭhatvāt tat sāraṃ hṛdayaṃ mahat.

Jayaratha's comment on *TĀ* 4.181, reads in part:

hṛdayaṃ—tathyaṃ rūpaṃ, sarvaśāstreṣūktaṃ, yasmādaiśvaryātmā ahaṃ parāmarśa evāsyāḥ svabhāvo, yanmāhātmyād viśvātmanā iyaṃ parisphuret.

It is said in all the authoritative texts that the Heart is the form of truth. Because its nature is the cognition of the "I" whose essence is sovereignty, and because of its majesty, She shines with a universal nature.

3. See *ŚSv* 1.5, cited in Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 29: udyamobhairava.

4. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 9, p. 10. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 4, notes 21 and 39, above.

5. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 34, p. 25:

tata eva jvalanagalanavṛttisārasaṃkocavikāsaśaktipradarśitaviśvonmeṣanimeṣaśatasaṃpādanāpratihatasāmarthya-mūlena uttarottarena sakāra-

aukāra-aḥkāralakṣaṇena bhāgatrayeṇa āviṣṭam anuttaraṃ trikoṇātmakaṃ mahāhṛdayaṃ. tasya ca trayo bhāgā aṃśāḥ.

6. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 13.213:

ajñānarūpatā puṃsi bodhaḥ saṃkocite hṛdi

saṃkoce vinivṛtte tu svasvabhāvaḥ prakāśate.

7. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 25, p. 19:

bhairavadevatābhir hṛdayāntargatābhiḥ svarūpanimīlanātmakaprapañca-spandaparivarjanena svarūponmīlanātmakaparispandapravaṇābhir dattam etad hṛdayalakṣaṇaṃ paraṃ jñānaṃ kṣapitaś ca saṃkocātmakamūlapāśa iti jānātyeva.

8. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.79:

antarbāhye dvaye vāpi sāmānyetarasundaraḥ

saṃvitspandastriśaktyātmā saṃkocapravikāsavān.

9. See *Spanda-kārikā* 1.1, and Kṣemarāja's comment, cited in Singh, *Spanda Kārikās*, pp. 5-17.

10. See on these terms *ŚSv* 2.5, Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 32, and Silburn, *LMDM*, p. 134.

11. *ŚSv* 3.45, translated in Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 231-232.

12. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 2.19, p. 105:

ata eva parādvaitaṃ yadviśvānugrahātmakam

tasyopāyaṃ paraṃ brūte hṛdayaṃ spandanātmakam

hṛdaye bodhamayo yaḥ svavimarśaḥ pūrṇaciccamatkāraḥ.

13. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.57b-58a:

tatrordhvakuṇḍalībhūmau spandanodarasundaraḥ

visargas tatra viśrāmyed matsyodaradaśājuṣi.

14. Eliade, *Yoga*, note 45, p. 308.

15. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.58b-60a:

rāsabhī vaḍavā yadvatsvadhāmānandamandiram

vikāsasaṃkocamayaṃ praviśya hṛdi hṛṣyati

tadvanmuhurlīnasṛṣṭabhāvavrātasunirbharām

śrayedvikāsasaṃkocarūḍhabhairavayāmalām.

See also Jayaratha's elucidation of this passage in his commentary, *TĀ*, vol. 3, p. 363.

16. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 270.

17. Discussions of the various aspects of the nature of the *visarga* are to be found

scattered throughout the above-mentioned texts. Crucial passages employed in the preparation of this chapter include Abhinavagupta, *PTLV*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 5; Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.888-899, p. 82; Abhinavagupta, *TA* 3.211-233, 3.136-146, 29.115-164; Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, introductory verses, pp. 34-35, 45-52.

18. See Kashinath Vasudev Abhyankar, *A Dictionary of Sanskrit Grammar*, 2nd ed., Gaekwad's Oriental Series, no. 134, ed. A. N. Jani (Baroda, India: Oriental Institute, 1977), p. 314.

19. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment to verses 5-9a, p. 5:

    tatra jñātṛtā nāma unmeṣanimeṣalakṣaṇena saṃkocavikāsātmajñānakriyālakṣaṇena svabhāvena svaparispandanasārā. na tu pariniṣṭhitaparicchinnajaḍarūpaghaṭāditulyas tasya ca saṃkocavikāsayogaḥ trikoṇahṛdayaspandanādiṣu yathāyathā sphuṭībhavati tathātathā jñātṛtvam utkṛṣyate yāvad bhairavasaṃvidi. yathāyathā nyūnībhavati tathātathā tan nikṛṣyate yāvaj jaḍe pāṣāṇādau. sa cāyam saṃkocavikāsalakṣaṇo visargaḥ svātantryātmā bhagavato'nuttarasya śaktiḥ. tena aḥ iti bhairavasaṃghaṭṭaviśramaṇodayaparamārthaśivaśaktisvarūpaṃ rudrayāmalam ucyate.

20. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 29.140-142.

21. See for example Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, p. 42, which verges on this error.

22. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ*, chap. 29.

23. See Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, pp. 5-9.

24. I am here following Gnoli's emendation of the published edition of the *PTlv* in the light of other manuscripts of the original text that he consulted in India.

25. See Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 113:

    akārādivisargāntaṃ śivatattvaṃ

26. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 6:

    sa eva vedyollāsaḥ karaṇatayā sṛjyamānānīndriyāṇi tatra kriyāśaktipradhānāni upasthapāyupādapāṇivāgādīni karmendriyāṇi jñānaśaktipradhānāni buddhīndriyāṇi ghrāṇarasanācakṣustvakśrotramiti.

27. Ibid.:

    tato vedyatāyāḥ krameṇa nyakkāre vedanabhāgasyollāse mano'haṃkāraḥ buddhiḥ pradhānaṃ puruṣaḥ. tathāhi pṛthvyādīni puruṣāntāni kādiṣu māntaṣu iti. puruṣasya hi saṃvedakarūpasyaiva parimitasya vedyarāśau gaṇanam. tena hi vinā pṛthivyādi vedyaṃ kathaṃ bhavet. tena vedyābhāgasyaiveyadrūpaṃ.

28. See Gerald J. Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, 2d. ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979), chap. 3.

29. See Abhinavagupta, *TS*, chap. 8.

30. See Chatterji, *Kashmir Shaivaism*, for an excellent description of the thirty-six *tattva*-s. See also Gnoli's emendations to the *PTv* in Raniero Gnoli, "Miscellanea Indica: Corrections and Emendations to the text of the *Parātriṃśikāvivaraṇa*," *East and West* 10 (1959): 192-212.

31. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ*, chap. 13.

32. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 5-9a, pp. 6-7:

yad vedyarāśer eva atyaktavedyabhāvasya bhinnavedyavedakaikīkaraṇaṃ tadvyāpṛtāni tattvāni kalā vāyurūpā kiṃcitkartṛtvena prerikā. aśuddhavidyā tejorūpā kiṃcijjñatvena prakāśikā ca. āpyāyikā māyā salilarūpā. abhiṣvaṅgarūpā nimajjanātmakastambhanasvabhāvā indropalakṣitā pṛthivīrūpā rāgaśaktiḥ. tā etāścatasraḥ śaktayaḥ puruṣaṃ dhārayanti madhye triśaṅkuvad viśramayanti, anyathā pāṣāṇādivat jaḍabhūmim evāpatet parameśvaravad vā saṃvidgaganam evāpatet. ubhayathāpi māyāpramātṛtābhāve vedyam api na kiṃcid iti, saṃkocavikāsau api na kaucit, saṃkocena vinā vikāsasyāpyayogāt. tadvisargarūpeṇa saṃkocavikāsātmanā idaṃ sarvaṃ ākṣiptaṃ. yat vedyasṛṣṭiḥ samucitavedakasṛṣṭiśceti.

33. For an excellent recounting of the myth of Triśaṅku see Wendy D. O'Flaherty, *Dreams, Illusion and other Realities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 103-109.

34. Abhinavagupta, *TS*, chap. 8. pp. 69-91.

35. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 7:

ākāśaśaktyā tu nātra māyāpramātṛtādhāne prayojanam asti. sā hi antarlīnā puruṣasya vedyaśūnyatayā vedyāvakāśasahiṣṇutayā ca pramātṛtvāt. tadīyāparā visargaśaktiḥ.

36. Abhinavagupta, *TS*, chap. 8.

37. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 7:

yadā tu vedyatāyāḥ krameṇa pracchādanaṃ saṃvidrūpasya ca prathanaṃ, tadā tatra tāvat dhṛtiḥ, tadrūpasyaiva āpyāyanaṃ, tatprakāśayogaḥ, tatraiva paramasvātantryalābhātmakaṃ spandanaṃ, sarvaṃ tenaiva rūpeṇa vyāptam. ity etad bṛṃhakaṃ svarūpasya pūrakaṃ pañcakaṃ śādīnāṃ vidyeśvarasadāśivaśaktiśivalakṣaṇaṃ sūkṣmapṛthivyaptejovāyvākāśarūpaṃ, sadyojātavāmadevāghoratatpuruṣeśānarūpaṃ brahmaśabdenākhyātām iti. evam asau parāpararūpā visargaśaktiḥ.

38. Abhinavagupta, *TS*, chap. 8.

39. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, pp. 7-8. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 5, note 40, above.

40. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 153-154; see Padoux, *Recherches*, chap. 5 on the correspondence of fifty phonemes to thirty-six *tattva*-s; see also the chart

prepared by Gnoli on p. 203 in his emendations to the *PTv*.

41. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 8:

tataś ca sarvam etad avibhāgaparāmarśarūpaṃ prathamataḥ, tato vibhāgaparāmarśātmanā pañcāśadvimarśarūpaṃ parāmṛśyarūpeṇa tu karmatāṃ prāptaṃ bahistattvajālaṃ jāyate. tasya parāmarśātmataiva jīvitam. sā ca mātṛkārūpā.

42. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, pp. 8-9:

sarveṣu śivarudrādirahasyatantreṣu yatkiṃciducyate tat sarvaṃ ita evodeti. yatkila parāvarasiddhidaṃ rūpaṃ tat sarvaṃ tattvaṣaḍtriṃśatyāṃ labhyate. tasyāśca parāmṛśyaṃ yajjaḍarūpaṃ śarīrasthānīyaṃ tasya parāmarśatā jīvitaṃ, sā ca asyāṃ bhagavatyām iti ittham eva sarvaṃ dadāti.

For the Sanskrit for the second part of this passage see chap. 4, note 27, above.

43. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.141:

visargamātraṃ nāthasya sṛṣṭisaṃhāravibhramāḥ
svātmanaḥ svātmani svātmakṣepo vaisargakī śaktiḥ.

44. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.888-899.

45. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.888:

tataḥ samagrasaṃdarbhabharitākārarūpiṇi
visargaḥ kila śākto 'sau vikṣepa iti yaḥ smṛtaḥ.

46. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.889:

visargasyaiva viśleṣa iti saptadaśī kalā
kvacidaṣṭadaśī saiva punaḥ prakṣobhayogataḥ.

47. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.890:

anuttarasyākārasya parabhairavarūpiṇaḥ
akulasya parā yeyaṃ kaulikī śaktir uttamā.

48. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.891-892:

sa evāyaṃ visargastu tasmājjātam idaṃ jagat
tasya prakṣobhayogyatvaṃ prakṣobhakalanodayaḥ
prakṣobhapūrṇatābhāvāttadakulakramonatā
iti ṣaṭkasvarūpātmavimarśāndolanoditam.

49. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.893-895:

anuttarasvabhāvatvād ādyasyaiva vijṛmbhitam
sa eva bhagavānantarnityaṃ prasphuradātmakaḥ
antaḥsthasarvabhāvaughapūrṇamadhyamaśaktikaḥ

svecchākṣobhasvabhāvodyajjagadānandasundaraḥ
nityaṃ sphurati saṃpūrṇavisargarasasundaraḥ
śivaśaktyoḥ sa saṃghaṭṭaḥ sneha ityabhidhīyate.

50. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.896-899a:

atraiva pūrṇavaisargapade labdhuṃ praveśanam
lehanāmanthanetyādisaṃpradāyam upāsate
tathāhi madhyamāṃ nāḍīm adhiṣṭhāyākhilaṃ vapuḥ
prāṇayat paramaṃ tejaḥ prakṣubdham ṛtumālyamadyataḥ
visṛṣṭirūpatāṃ gacched yātyānandacamatkriyām
apūrṇā kevalaṃ sā tu pūrṇā tu bhagavan mayī
tena vaisargakī śaktir ekaiveyaṃ prajṛmbhate.

51. Abhinavagupta, *TA* 3.69. For the Sanskrit for this verse see chap. 4, note 23, above.

52. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.200b-208a:

itthaṃ nādānuvedhena parāmarśasvabhāvakaḥ
śivo mātāpitṛtvena kartā viśvatra saṃsthitaḥ
visarga eva śākto 'yaṃ śivabindutayā punaḥ
garbhīkṛtānantaviśvaḥ śrayate 'nuttarātmatām
aparicchinnaviśvāntaḥsāre svātmani yaḥ prabhoḥ
parāmarśaḥ sa evokto dvayasaṃpattilakṣaṇaḥ
anuttaravisargātmaśivaśaktyadvayātmani
parāmarśo nirbharatvād ahamityucyate vibhoḥ
anuttarādyā prasṛtirhāntā śaktisvarūpiṇī
pratyāhṛtāśeṣaviśvānuttare sā nilīyate
tadidaṃ viśvam antaḥstham śaktau sānuttare pare
tattasyām iti yat satyaṃ vibhunā saṃpuṭīkṛtiḥ
tena śrītrīśikāśāstre śakteh saṃpuṭitākṛtiḥ
saṃvittau bhāti yad viśvaṃ tatrāpi khalu saṃvidā
tadetattritiyaṃ dvandvayogāt saṃghātatāṃ gatam
ekam eva paraṃ rūpaṃ bhairavasyāhamātmakam.

53. On the concept of *saṃpuṭīkaraṇa* see Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, verses 29-32a and comment; Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 1.908; Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 262; Abhinavagupta, *TS*, chap. 22, p. 200.

54. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.208b-219:

visargaśaktir yā śaṃbhoḥ setthaṃ sarvatra vartate
tata eva samasto 'yamānandarasavibhramaḥ
tathāhi madhure gīte sparśe vā candanādike
mādhyasthyavigame yāsau hṛdaye spandamānatā
ānandaśaktiḥ saivoktā yataḥ sahṛdayo janaḥ
pūrvaṃ visṛjyasakalaṃ kartavyaṃ śūnyatānale
cittaviśrāntisaṃjño 'yamāṇavastadanantaram
dṛṣṭaśrutāditadvastupronmukhyatvaṃ svasaṃvidi
cittasaṃbodhanāmoktaḥ śāktollāsabharātmakaḥ
tatronmukhatvatadvastusaṃghaṭṭādvastuno hṛdi
rūḍheḥ pūrṇatayāveśānmitacittalayācchive
prāgvadbhaviṣyadaunmukhyasaṃbhāvyamitatālayāt
cittapralayanāmāsau visargaḥ śāmbhavaḥ paraḥ
tattvarakṣāvidhāne 'to visargatraidhamucyate
hṛtpadmakośamadhyasthastayoḥ saṃghaṭṭa iṣyate
visargo 'ntaḥ sa ca proktaścittaviśrāntilakṣaṇaḥ
dvitīyaḥ sa visargas tu cittasaṃbodhalakṣaṇaḥ
ekībhūtaṃ vibhātyatra jagadetaccarācaram
grāhyagrāhakabhedo vai kiṃcidatreśyate yadā
tadāsau sakalaḥ prokto niṣkalaḥ śivayogataḥ
grāhyagrāhakavicchittisaṃpūrṇagrahaṇātmakaḥ
tṛtīyaḥ sa visargastu cittapralayalakṣaṇaḥ
ekībhāvātmakaḥ sūkṣmo vijñānātmātmanirvṛtaḥ.

55. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.9-10:
ucyate svātmasaṃvittiḥ svabhāvādeva nirbharā
nāsyām apāsyaṃ nādheyaṃ kiṃcidityuditaṃ purā
kiṃ tu durghaṭakāritvāt svācchandyān nirmālādasau
svātmapracchādanakrīḍāpaṇḍitaḥ parameśvaraḥ
anāvṛtte svarūpe 'pi yadātmācchadanaṃ vibhoḥ
saiva māyā yato bheda etāvān viśvavṛttikaḥ.

56. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 13.103-104:
devaḥ svatantraścidrūpaḥ prakāśātmā svabhāvataḥ
rūpapracchādanakrīḍāyogād aṇuranekakaḥ
sa svayaṃ kalpitākāravikalpātmakakarmabhiḥ

badhnātyātmānam evehaḥ svātantryād iti varṇitam
svātantryamahimaivāyāṃ devasya yadasau punaḥ
svaṃ rūpaṃ pariśuddhaṃ satspṛśatyapyaṇutāmayaḥ.

57. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 29.115b-117a:

itthaṃ yāmalametadgalitabhidāsaṃkathaṃ yadeva syāt
kramatāratamyayogātsaiva hi saṃvid visargasaṅghaṭṭaḥ
taddhruvadhāmānuttaram ubhayātmakajagadudārasānandam
no śāntaṃ nāpyuditaṃ śāntoditasūtikāraṇam paraṃ kaulam.

58. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 29.140-141b:

trividho visarga itthaṃ saṅghaṭṭaḥ proditastathā śāntaḥ
visṛjati yato vicitraḥ sargo vigataśca yatra sarga iti
kuṇḍaṃ śaktiḥ śivo liṅgaṃ melakaṃ paraṃ padam.

59. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 21-24, p. 17:

vedakavedanarūpāvaroheṇa vedyābhinnasāmānyarūpatā brāhmī viśrānti. ityevambhūtaviśrāṃtitrayamayaśāntoditatadubhayalakṣaṇakoṇatrayaikarasatākāri paraṃ visargatattvaṃ saṃvidbhairavanātha eveti tātparyārthaḥ.

60. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 29-32, pp. 21-22:

sarvābhedaghanaturyātītavṛttiviśrāntyāṃ tasyāṃ yat viśramaṇaṃ visargaḥ, sa eva yāgaḥ. tasyām api ca turyātītavṛttau visargakalāyāṃ svīkṛtasakalasṛṣṭikāyāṃ tad eva jāgradādidaśācatuṣkakroḍīkārakam aukārāntaṃ rūpaṃ prakṣipya yajet. yena madhyavartivisarga ubhayakoṭigatasvarasadvṛttisparśī, sarvātītarūpam ata eva sarvatattvamayīṃ sarvaiś ca avayavāyamānair bhāvarāśibhir yuktāṃ maheśānasya parabhairavasya abhedena vartamānāṃ śrīparadevatām anuttarasvarūpāṃ svīkaroti.

7. The Heart and Natural Metaphors

1. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, verse 1, p. 1.

2. Ibid., comment on verse 1, p. 2:

anena prakāreṇa jñātamātreṇa khecarī bodhabhūmisaṃcāriṇī satī iyaṃ saṃvicchaktiḥ samatām avikalpatvaṃ purṇatvam ātmano vrajet gacchej jānīyāt. tatprakārāparijñāne tu na khecarī abodharūpe vedyāṃśe saṃcaraṇāt. tat eva vedyaiḥ nīlādibhir niyantriteti na pūrṇaśaktiḥ. Kiṃ ca dhāraṇādikrameṇa prāṇayogādikṛtāḥ siddhayaḥ santi anuttaraṃ saṃvinmātrarūpam akramaṃ kathaṃ kaulikasiddhiṃ sakramāṃ dadāti yena jñātamātreṇa devīrūpatvam vrajet.

3. Raffaele Torella, "Una Traduzione Francese della *Parātriṃśikālaghuvṛtti* di Abhinavagupta," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 54 (1980): 173.

4. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.65. For the Sanskrit for this verse see chap. 4, note 23, above.

5. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, verse 2a, p. 2.

6. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, lines 2-5, p. 265:

   sṛṣṭiḥ ādikṣāntatādātmyamayaṃ hṛdayaṃ śaktir guhyam iti, vīratvam ata eva āsanam api sarvaṃ tatraiva - ādhārādheyayoḥ parasparaikarūpatvāt yathoktam: sarvabhūtastham ātmānam ityādi.

7. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 7. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 6, note 35, above.

8. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.184-186a. For the Sanskrit for this verse see chap. 6, note 2, above.

9. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.102.

10. Ibid. 3.102-104a:

    jaḍādvilakṣaṇo bodho yato na parimīyate

    tena bodhamahāsindhorullāsinyaḥ svaśaktayaḥ

    āśrayanty urmaya iva svātmasaṃghaṭṭacitratām

    svātmasaṃghaṭṭavaicitryaṃ śaktīnāṃ yatparasparam

    etadeva paraṃ prāhuḥ kriyāśakteḥ sphuṭaṃ vapuḥ.

11. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 5-9a, p. 8. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 6, note 41, above.

12. *MVT*, verse 2a, p. 1:

    jagadarṇavamagnānāṃ tārakam.

13. *ŚSv* 3.16. The Sanskrit of this verse is cited in Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 163, but this rendering is mine.

    āsanasthaḥ sukhaṃ hrade nimajjati.

14. Kṣemarāja, commentary on *Śiva-sūtra* 3.16. For the Sanskrit see Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 163, but this rendering is mine.

15. *ŚSv*, closing stanzas. For the Sanskrit see Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 231, but this rendering is mine. Note that there is a mistake in Singh; p. 231, line 13 should read:

    bodhasudhāsindhau.

16. Reference to the *sudhāsindhu*, that ocean of nectar that among the 60 oceans of Indian mythology is innermost: cool, providing immortality, it symbolizes infinite Consciousness. Its intoxicating nectar, beverage of the vedic gods, gives immortality and annihilates the limits of existence. [author's translation] Silburn, trans., *"Śivasūtra" et "Vimarśinī" de Kṣemarāja*, note 4, p. 112.

17. *RV* 4.58.11, trans. O'Flaherty, p. 127.

18. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 29.133-135a:

nijadehagate dhāmani tathaiva pūjyaṃ samabhyasyet

yattacchāntaṃ rūpaṃ tenābyastena hṛdayasaṃvittyā

śāntaṃ śivapadameti hi galitataraṅgārṇavaprakhyam

tacchāntapadādhyāsāccakrastho devatāgaṇaḥ sarvaḥ

tiṣṭhatyuparatavṛttiḥ śūnyālambī nirānandaḥ.

19. Ibid. 15.59-60:

evaṃ somārkatejaḥsu śivabhāvena bhāvanāt

nimajjandhautamālinyaḥ kva vā yogyo na jāyate

ātmaiva parameśāno nirācāramahāhradaḥ

viśvaṃ nimajjya tatraiva tiṣṭhecchūddhaśca śodhakaḥ.

20. Ibid. 4.118-120a.

21. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 29-32, p. 22:

tadrūpatāsiddhyartham eva tu sugandhibhir ayatnata eva hṛdayānupraveśa-śālibhiḥ puṣpair hṛdayāntaḥsvarūpasamarpaṇād eva hṛdayasya poṣakair bāhyābhyantaraiḥ sarvair dravyair yathā śaktitayā, asvīkṛtaśaktisvarūpasya saṅkucitavṛtter yāgaṃ praty ayogyatvāt śaktyā svarūpavikāsarūpayā tad-upayoginyāpi bāhyayā ānandinyā snānavilepanadhūpatāmbūlāsavādi-saṃbhārasubhagayā bāhyadravyaśaktyā samyagarcayet. katham, parayā bhaktyā parimitasya dehaprāṇapuryaṣṭakāder apradhānatākaraṇena tad-rūpatānimajjanātmakaprahvībhāvasaṃpādanapuraḥsarena taduktarūpa-yājyadevatātmakaparasaṃvidrūpapradhānatvāpādanalakṣaṇena bhajanena śraddhātiśayena samāveśadāyinetyarthaḥ.

22. Alper, "Śiva," p. 385.

23. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, end of comment on verse 34, pp. 24-26.

24. Ibid., verse 5, p. 4:

athādyās tithayaḥ sarvāḥ svarā bindvavasānakāḥ

tadantaḥ kālayogena somasūryau prakīrtitau.

25. Ibid., comment on verses 5-9a, p. 5:

saṃkocavikāsayoge eva madhye anuttaraḥ, ānandaḥ, icchā, īśanā, unmeṣaḥ, ūnatā, iccheśanayor asphuṭasphuṭavedyollāsaḥ ṛ ṝ ḷ ḹ bhavati, tayor iccheśa-nayor anuttarānandābhyāṃ sandhīyamānatvāt e ai, unmeṣonatayos tābhyām eva tathākṛtatvāt o au iti bhavati, tadanantaraṃ vedyajātasya vedakātmaka-bindusvarūpasaṃskāraśeṣatvam ity anena pūrṇo bhavati, ity evaṃ pūrṇā-nandacidrūpavisargaśaktimayaṃ parabhairavayāmalaṃ.

26. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.192b. For the Sanskrit for this verse see chap. 5, note 39, above.

27. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 5:

tatra ca visargarūpatā sāmānyākārā viśeṣeṣu pañcadasviti pṛthaggaṇanārhā na bhavati.

28. Ibid., pp. 5-6:

ye akārādyā binduparyantāḥ svarāḥ ta eva bodhacandrasya sthitiṃ pūrayāntīti tithaya uktāḥ. evaṃ sā bodhacandrasya prakāśānandamayasya anuttarasya visargaśaktiḥ pañcadaśabhis tithibhiḥ pūryate.

29. Ibid., p. 6:

te caite sarve svarāḥ śabdanasvarūpāḥ parāmarśātmāno jagadapekṣayā svayaṃ rājantaḥ svaprakāśāḥ. teṣāṃ antaḥ somasūryau saṃkocavikāsau tadātmā tadantaḥ bindudvayātmā visarga iti yāvat.

30. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 6.92b-99.

31. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 34, pp. 24-26.

32. Ibid., verse 34, p. 24:

ādyantarahitaṃ bījaṃ vikasat tithimadhyagam hṛtpadmāntargataṃ dhyāyet somāṃśuṃ nityam abhyaset

33. Ibid., comment on verse 34, p. 25:

bījaṃ vācakarūpaṃ hṛdayaṃ tasya vācyaṃ somāṃśaṃ saśaktikasya bhagavato bhairavanāthasya yāmalaṃ saṃghaṭṭaprabhāpuñjas taṃ vācyavācakābhedakrameṇa abhyased iti upadeśaḥ.

34. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 26.64.

35. Ibid. 28.367:

adhigamyoditaṃ tena mṛtyor bhītir vinaśyati
viditamṛtisatattvāḥ saṃvidambhonidhānād
acalahṛdayavīryākarṣaniṣpīṣanottham
amṛtam iti nigīrṇe kālakūṭe 'tra devā yadi pivatha tadānīṃ
niścitaṃ vaḥ śivatvam.

36. Ibid. 5.64b-67:

athenduḥ ṣoḍaśakalo visargagrāsamantharaḥ
saṃjīvanyamṛtaṃ bodhavahnau visṛjati sphuran
icchājñānakriyāśaktisūkṣmarandhrasrugagragam
tadevamatadamṛtam divyaṃ saṃviddevīṣu tarpakam
visargāmṛtametāvad bodhākhye hutabhojini
visṛṣṭaṃ cedbhavet sarvaṃ hutaṃ ṣoḍādhvamaṇḍalam

yato 'nuttaranāthasya visargaḥ kulanāyikā
tatkṣobhaḥ kādihāntaṃ tatprasarastattvapaddhatiḥ.

37. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 5.

38. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.111b-113a:

avibhāgaḥ prakāśo yaḥ sa binduḥ paramo hi naḥ
tattvarakṣāvidhāne ca taduktaṃ parameśinā
hṛtpadmamaṇḍalāntaḥstho naraśaktiśivātmakaḥ
boddhavyo layabhedena vindurvimalatārakaḥ
yo 'sau nādātmakaḥ śabdaḥ sarvaprāṇiṣvavasthitaḥ.

See also on the notion of *bindu*, Padoux, *Recherches*, pp. 93, 96, 98, 93, 221-224. See the important passage on the *bindu* as residing in the lotus of the Heart in Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.110-113; also *TĀ* 3.220-225, which discusses the five aspects of the *bindu* and quotes the *Siddha-yogeśvarī-matam*, an important text of the Kaula tradition.

39. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 176:

binduḥ punarvedanāmātraśeṣataiva.

40. See *ŚSv* 2.3, cited in Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, p. 88-97.

41. Kṣemarāja's comment on *Netra-tantra* 21.66, quoted in Padoux, *Recherches*, p. 95.

42. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.19b-25a:

tatra dhyānamayaṃ tāvad anuttaram ihocyate
yaḥ prakāśaḥ svatantro 'yaṃ citsvabhāvo hṛdi sthitaḥ
sarvatattvamayaḥ proktametacca triśiromate
kadaṃlīsaṃpuṭākāraṃ saṃbāhyābhyantarāntaram
īkṣate hṛdayāntaḥsthaṃ tatpuṣpamiva tattvavit
somasūryāgnisaṃghaṭṭaṃ tatra dhyāyed ananyadhīḥ
taddhyānāraṇisaṃkṣobhān mahābhairavahavyabhuk
hṛdayākhye mahākuṇḍe jājvalan sphītatāṃ vrajet
tasya śaktimataḥ sphītaśakter bhairavatejasaḥ
mātṛmānaprameyākhyaṃ dhāmābhedena bhāvayet
vahnyarkasomaśaktīnāṃ tadeva tritayaṃ bhavet
parā parāparā ceyam aparā ca sadoditā.

43. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, verses 24b-25a, p. 16:

yathā nyagrodhabījasthaḥ śaktirūpo mahādrumaḥ
tathā hṛdayabījasthaṃ jagadetaccarācaram.

44. Ibid., comment on verses 33-34, p. 25:

gaccat viśvasya kālarūpāṇāṃ tithīnāṃ madhyagaṃ sāmānyarūpatayā avibhāgaparāmarśarūpaṃ svasmin hṛdaye saṃvillakṣaṇe saṃkocavikāsalīlāyogāt kamalarūpe'ntargataṃ.

45. Abhinavagupta's explanation of this in *PTv*, pp. 55-56.

46. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 84-88:

tathā hi idaṃ viśvaṃ ciccittaprāṇadehasukhaduḥkhendriyabhūtaghaṭādimayam ekasyāṃ vā parasyāṃ parameśvaryāṃ bhairavasaṃvidi avibhāgenaiva bodhātmakena rūpeṇa āste, yadyapi bodhātmakaṃ rūpaṃ nāstameti jātu cidapi tadastamaye aprakāśamānatāpatteḥ, tathāpi parasparābhāvātmako 'vacchedaḥ tatra nāsti, viśvātmāna eva bhāvāḥ, tatra ca yadi eṣām avasthitiḥ na syāt tat prathamānusaṃdhānādikam eva akṣapreraṇopayogy api na bhavet iti samucitānuditedantākam ahaṃparāmarśamātrābhinnam eva bhāvajātaṃ vigatabhedakalanaṃ tiṣṭhati na tatra kaścit avacchedaḥ, tathā yadi atra spaṣṭaḥ sannayaṃ vidhiḥ kaulikaḥ sthito viśrāntiṃ prāptaḥ, sarvam idaṃ hi ṣaṭtriṃśadātma, tataḥ sāmānyaspandasaṃvidātmanaḥ śaktimataḥ paraśaktipradhānāt śivāt svaśaktyā sṛṣṭam api sat tatraiva bhairavaviśeṣaspandātmani śaktipradhāne svasvarūpe viśrāmyet, tad eva svasvabhāvaniṣṭhitatvaṃ bhāvānāṃ. Yad uktaṃ "yasmin sarvaṃ . . . " iti. tad etat śivaśaktyātmaiva sāmānyaviśeṣarūpam ekātmakam api parameśvareṇaiva upadeśopāyapraveśāya pṛthakkṛtya nirūpyamāṇaṃ vastutaḥ punar ekam eva svatantracinmayamaham ity aiśvaryaśaktisāram anuttaram. yatra kīdṛśe svasvarūpe 'vasthitaḥ "mama hṛdvyomni" mameti yat etat hṛdayaṃ sarvabhāvānāṃ sthānaṃ pratiṣṭhādhāma, nīlādīnāṃ hi antataḥ krimiparyantaṃ cid amśāniviṣṭānāṃ na kiṃcit nīlādi rūpam iti pramātur eva yat "mameti" avicchinnacamatkārāṃśopārohitvaṃ "mama nīlaṃ bhātam" iti tad eva nīlādirūpatvam iti, tasya mamety asya nīlādyanantasarvabhāvahṛdayasya yat vyoma yatra tat mamakārātmakaṃ viśvaṃ vītaṃ samyak dhṛtam, ata eva tyaktabhinna nijarūpatayā śūnyarūpaṃ vyoma yatra, tathā mametyasya bhinnābhinnarūpaparāparasaṃvidātmano yat hṛdayaṃ paryantapratiṣṭhādhāma "ahamiti" tasyāpi vyoma saṃhārarūpakalanena "ma ha a" iti narātmakaṃ līnaṃ bindvātmaśaktau, ma-iti kuṇḍalinī-ha-kalārūpāyāṃ praviśya, paripūrṇanirgalacamatkāre, sarvācchinne a-ityanupraviṣṭaṃ tathābhavati, etadeva mama hṛdvyoma, evaṃ yat idam prasṛtaṃ yatra ca viśrāntaṃ tadeva nityam anāvṛtasvabhāvaṃ svayaṃ prathamānam anapahnavanīyam anuttaram.
yathoktam:
yatra sthitam idaṃ sarvaṃ kāryaṃ yasmāccanirgatam tasyānāvṛtarūpatvānna nirodho'sti kutracit. āvarakatvena nirodhakābhimato'pi hi tadāvaraṇādi svātantryeṇa prakāśamāno dṛkkriyātmaka eva parameśvaraḥ, yadityayaṃ nipātaḥ sarvavibhaktyarthavṛttiḥ aparavākyīyasaṃbandhaucityāt viśeṣo sthāsnur atra pañcamyarthe saptamyarthe ca vartate. ayaṃ hi āñjasyena arthaḥ - yad ayaṃ kaulikaḥ sṛṣṭiprasaraḥ, yacca mama hṛdvyomni avasthitaḥ tadevānuttaram.

47. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.192-193:

etadrūpaparāmarśamakṛtrimamanābilam

ahamityāhureṣaiva prakaśāsya prakāśatā

etad vīryaṃ hi sarveṣāṃ mantrāṇām hṛdayātmakam

vinānena jaḍāste syur jīvā iva vinā hṛdā.

48. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 269-270:

upāsakastvanupraviṣṭavīryasattāsārahṛdayo 'pi kramapūjāmāhātmyādeva tāratamyātiśayāt svayam vā prasannagurubhaṭṭarakavadanakamalādvā mantravīryaṃ hṛdayātmakamāsādayati jīvanmuktaśca bhavati.

8. The Heart as *Mantra*

1. See Utpaladeva, *ĪPK* 3.1.16 in Pandey, *Bhāskarī;* see also Abhinavagupta, *ĪPV* 3.2.1, vol. 2, p. 271. Actually, Utpaladeva credits his own teacher, Somānanda, with this new discovery and claims that he announces it in the *Śiva-dṛṣṭi.*

2. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, verse 10 and commentary, p. 10:

etannāyoginījāto nārudro labhate sphuṭam

hṛdayaṃ devadevasya sadyo yogavimokṣadaṃ.

etat bījaṃ yo labhate sa lābhakāla eva na paśuḥ; yato'smin labdhe etat tasya hṛdayaṃ jāyate. etad hṛdayataiva bhairavatvam. atha rudrayoginīyāmalena yāvan na jātaḥ kṛtaśaktipātalakṣaṇasvarūponmīlanaḥ tāvad etad hṛdayaṃ katham asyonmīlati.

3. Ibid., verses 33b-36, pp. 24, 26.

kṛtapūjāvidhiḥ samyak smaran bījaṃprasiddhyati.

ādyantarahitaṃ bījaṃ vikasat tithimadhyagam

hṛtpadmāntargataṃ dhyāyet somāṃśuṃ nityam abhyaset.

yānyān kāmayate kāmāṃs tāntāñchīghram avāpnuyāt

ajñaḥ pratyakṣatām eti sarvajñatvaṃ na saṃśayaḥ.

evaṃ mantraphalāvāptir ity etadrudrayāmalam

etad abhyasyataḥ siddhiḥ sarvajñatvam avāpnuyāt.

4. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.66:

mate ca pustakādvidyādhyayane doṣa īdṛśaḥ.

See also Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 15.594 and 26.20-24, which warn against writing *mantra*-s down.

5. Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition*, p. 103.

6. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.33-85, for the discussion of the nature of the teacher; also 5.97.

7. The reader should also consult aspects of the topic of *mantra* as discussed in Eliade, *Yoga*, pp. 200-273, and passim; Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition*, chap. 4,

pp. 101-163. See also the excellent and very detailed study of several Kashmir Shaiva *mantra*-s provided by Padoux in his *Recherches*, chap. 7. In addition, Padoux has written a series of articles on *mantraśāstra* (listed in the Bibliography) which the reader should also consult. The reader will also find listed there two recent collections of articles on *mantra*, one edited by Padoux and one edited by Alper, which are directly relevant here.

8. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 1.233-240, 28.194-212.

9. Ibid. 4.49-50.

10. Ibid. 4.40.

11. Ibid., chap. 1, where Abhinavagupta expounds the distinction between *bauddha* and *pauruṣa jñāna*.

12. Ibid. 4.33-37.

13. *ŚSv* 2.6, cited in Singh, *Śiva Sūtras*, pp. 102-103.

14. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 13.130b.

15. On these three *upāya*-s see chaps. 3-5 of Abhinavagupta, *TĀ*, each of which deals respectively with one of them.

16. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 23.33-39:

hṛccakrādutthitā sūkṣmā śaśisphaṭikasaṃnibhā
lekhākārā nādarūpā praśāntā cakrapañktigā
dvādaśānte nirūḍhā sā sauṣumne tripathāntare
tatra hṛccakramāpūrya japenmantraṃ jvalatprabham
cakṣurlomādirandhraughavahajjvālaurvasaṃnibham
yāvacchāntaśikhākīrṇaṃ viśvājyapravilāpakam
tadājyadhārāsaṃtṛptamānābhikuharāntaram
evaṃ mantrā mokṣadāḥ syurdīptā buddhāḥ sunirmalāḥ
mūlakandanabhonābhihṛtkaṇṭhālikatālugam
ardhendurodhikānādatadantavyāpiśaktigam
samanonmanaśuddhātmaparacakrasamāśritam
yatra yatra japeccakre samastavyastabhedanāt
tatra tatra mahāmantra iti devyākhyayāmale
vidyāvratamidaṃ proktaṃ mantravīryaprasiddhaye.

17. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, verse 25, p. 19:

evaṃ yo vetti tattvena tasya nirvāṇagāminī
dīkṣā bhavaty asandigdhā tilājyāhutivarjitā.

18. Ibid., comment on verse 25, p. 19:

tena dānakṣapaṇalakṣaṇāṃ dīkṣāṃ svapratītisāreyam (svaprakāśaṃ) nayet. na atra tilādīnām upayogaḥ etavajjīvanmuktyātmakaparamasiddhimātra-pariniṣṭhitadhiyaṃ prati hṛdayabījakalābhābhyadhikaṃ na kiṃcid upayujyate ity uktam.

19. Ibid., verse 17, p. 14:

anena siddhāḥ setsyanti sādhayanti ca mantriṇaḥ.

20. Ibid., comment on verse 18, p. 14:

etat prāptimātram eva sādhyaṃ, na tvatra vidyāvratādi kiṃcit sahakāri-bhavenopayogi kevalaṃ parikṣīnaśaṅkātaṅkatvam atra upayogi śaṅkāyāḥ sandehavipratipattisāratayā ekarasatadvimarśātmakasamāveśavighna-bhūtatvād.

21. Ibid., verse 19, p. 14:

adṛṣṭamaṇḍalo'py evaṃ yaḥ kaścid vetti tattvataḥ

sa siddhibhāg bhaven nityaṃ sa yogī sa ca dīkṣitaḥ.

22. Ibid., comment on verses 19a-21a, p. 15:

yajane yat vidhānam iti kartavyatā, tām avidvān api vidvān eva bhavati pūrṇatatphalalābhāt. yas tu laukikavaidikaśaivavāmadakṣinakulādipra-siddhān vidhīn vidhitvena na jānāti, sa eva atra yajane vidhijño jāyate anuttara-vidhiṃ yato jānāti. anuttarasaṃvinmātrarūpe sarvam anyat bahiraṅgaṃ bhavati.

23. See Abhinavagupta, *TĀ*, chap. 30, and Jayaratha's comment for a great variety of *mantra*-s used by the different Kashmir Shaiva lineages, in different ritual and meditative environments. See the novel and perhaps rather controversial discussion of this problem in Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition*, pp. 102-132. See also the more cautious discussion in Gupta, Hoens and Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism*, pp. 90-117.

24. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 5-9a, p. 8:

ata eva sarveṣāṃ mantrāṇāṃ guptārthabhājāṃ bījapiṇḍātmanāṃ catuṣkala-navātmādīnāṃ puruṣarūpavācyādhyasitānāṃ ca vidyānāṃ saṃvedyamāṇa-sphuṭārtharūpāṇāṃ namaḥ śivāya—ityādikānāṃ mālāmantrāṇāṃ strīrūpa-vācyādhyāsitānāṃ ca sarveṣām iyaṃ yoniḥ avibhāgaparāmarśatārūpaṃ kāraṇaṃ.

25. Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition*, p. 102.

26. Gerald J. Larson, unpublished lectures on Yoga, delivered at the University of California, Santa Barbara, April, 1979.

27. One of the most sophisticated studies of the non-dual Kashmir Shaiva tradition, Padoux's *Recherches* has focussed on the tradition's teachings about language.

His study demonstrates in detail the centrality of the symbolism of language for the tradition.

28. For an excellent recounting of the myth of Triśanku see Wendy D. O'Flaherty, *Dreams, Illusion and other Realities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 103-109.

29. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 33-34, p. 25:

tatra mukhyameva tāvat pūrṇahṛdayasvarūpam āha ādyantābhyām utpattivināśābhyāṃ rahitaṃ yat viśvasya bījaṃ tata eva bījatvāt viśvātmanā vikasat anavarataṃ vikāsaṃ gacchat viśvasya kālarūpāṇāṃ tithīnāṃ madhyagaṃ sāmānyarūpatayā avibhāgaparāmarśarūpaṃ svasmin hṛdaye saṃvillakṣaṇe saṃkocavikāsalīlāyogāt kamalarūpe'ntargataṃ tāṃ saṃvidaṃ praviśya sañkocahaṭhāpasaraṇakāritayā vikāsayat dhyāyet nityam. ataśca pūrṇabhairavatā siddhiḥ.

30. Ibid., comment on verse 25, p. 16. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 6, note 7, above.

31. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.140-141:

kiṃ punaḥ samayāpekṣāṃ vinā ye bījapiṇḍakāḥ

saṃvidaṃ spandayantyete neyuḥ saṃvidupāyatām

vācyābhāvādudāsīnasaṃvitspandātsvadhāmataḥ

prāṇollāsanirodhābhyāṃ bījapiṇḍeṣu pūrṇatā.

32. See the account of the origin of the *Mālinī-vijayottara-tantra* in Pandey, *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 550-552.

33. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.97.

34. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, verse 9 and comment, p. 9:

caturdaśayutam bhadre tithīśāntasamanvitam

tṛtīyaṃ brahma suśroṇi hṛdayam bhairavātmanaḥ.

caturdaśena svareṇa paripūrṇānuttarānandaśālinā saṃpūrṇakriyāśaktiśarīronmeṣonatvasaṃpadākriyāśaktidvārāntarlīnecchājñānaśaktiyugalena. yutaṃ satataṃ miśrībhūtaṃ yad idaṃ tṛtīyam brahma sadāśivatattvātmakaṃ aghoraprakāśasvarūpam asphuṭībhūtedantātmakagrāhyarāśilakṣaṇaṃ sadrūpaṃ viśvaṃ tat tithīśānāṃ pañcadaśānāṃ svarāṇāṃ yo'ntaḥ paryantabhittibhūto visargaḥ tasmin samyak aviyogena anvitaṃ viśrāntaṃ sat bhairavātamano bhagavataḥ śabdarāśeḥ viśvaśarīrarasya hṛdayaṃ.

See also the occurrence of the Heart *mantra SAUḤ* in the *MVT* 4.25. On the *brahmapañcaka*, see also Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 119.

35. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment to verses 21-24, pp. 16-18:

yathā ghaṭaśarāvaprabhṛtiprapañcavarjane mṛṇmātrameva satyaṃ, mṛdrūpatātmakaprapañcaparivarjane'pi gandha ityeva satyaṃ gandharūpatā-

viśeṣāparāmarśe ahamityeva satyaṃ, tathābhūtabhedabhaṅge'pi sukhaduḥkhamoharūpatā sāram, sukhādivaicitryakartane vedyavedakamātrarupatā, paryante vedyavedakarūpabhedavigalane sadityeva avaśiṣyate, tatrāpi varṇatrayaparāmarśaviśīrṇatākaraṇe, ādyavarṇamātraviśrāntiḥ, tathā jalatattvāder api māyātattvaparyantasya vedyarūpasyāśuddhādhvamadhyapātinaḥ sarvasya saivāntyaviśrāntir ity antyaviśrāntikāle sarvam ekaghanam amṛtam ātmabhūtam brahma. tāvati brahmavādināṃ viśrāntiḥ tannirmathanapravṛttyā tu bhairavo'pi viśvasṛṣṭikārī. gītaṃ ca "mama yonir mahad brahma tasmin garbhaṃ dadhamy aham, saṃbhavaḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ tato bhavati bhārata (B.G. 14, 3) iti. tasyāpi yadā sanmātraviśrāntidhāmnaḥ svarūpabhedavigalane na rupaṃ parāmṛśyate, tadā prakāśavimarśanaśaktirūpe'nupraviṣṭasya tasyāvabhāsanam.

(For next section of Sanskrit see chap. 5, note 46 above.)

tad etad vedyavedanavedakaviśrāntitrayamayaṃ varṇatrayasya rūpaṃ. tatra yāṃ viśrāntiṃ pradhānīkaroti tadantam evoccāraṇaṃ iti tridhā sampadyate. tatra bhogo bhuktimuktī ubhayam muktir iti krameṇa siddhayaḥ yatra tadekaghaṭa eva ekaḥ parāmarśo viśrāntisthānam akramaṃ sarvaṃ sadrūpam icchādidvāreṇa parabhairave visṛjyate kṣipyate, parabhairave cābhedena sad tad icchādidvāreṇa vedyatayā bahir visṛjyate iti vaisargakī. sadrūpaṃ vedyaṃ bhairavātmakavedakasvarūpam iti ubhayasparśanāc chaktirūpateti cāturdaśī.

(For the next section of Sanskrit see chap. 6, note 59 above.)

36. Kṣemarāja, *PP*, pp. 11-12:

ityāmnāyanityā parābhaṭṭārikārūpe hṛdayabīje antarbhūtam etajjagat. Katham ? Yathā ghaṭaśarāvādīnāṃ mṛdvikārānāṃ pāramārthikaṃ rūpaṃ mṛdeva, yathā vā jalādidravajātīnāṃ vicāryamāṇam vyāvasthitaṃ rūpaṃ jalādisāmānyameva bhavati, tathā pṛthvyādimāyāntānāṃ tattvānāṃ satattvaṃ mīmāṃsyamānaṃ sad ityeva bhavet, asyāpi padasya nirūpyamāṇaṃ dhātvarthavyañjakaṃ pratyayāṃśaṃ visṛjya prakṛtimātrarūpaḥ sakāra evāvaśiṣyate, tadantargatam ekatriṃśattatvam, tataḥ paraṃ śuddhavidyeśvarasadāśivatattvāni jñāna-kriyāsārāṇi śaktiviśeṣatvāt aukāre 'bhyupagamarūpe 'nuttaraśaktimaye 'ntarbhūtāni. ataḥ paramūrdhvādhaḥ sṛṣṭirūpo visarjanīyaḥ evaṃ-bhūtasya hṛdayabījasya mahāmantrātmako viśvamayo viśvottīrṇaḥ paramaśiva evodayaviśrāntisthānatvān nijasvabhāvaḥ. īdṛśam hṛdayabījaṃ tattvato yo veda samāviśati ca sa paramārthato dīkṣitaḥ prāṇān dhārayan laukikavad vartamāno jīvanmukta eva bhavati, dehapāte paramaśivabhaṭṭāraka eva bhavati.

37. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.186b-193:

tathā hi sad idaṃ brahmamūlaṃ māyāṇḍasaṃjñitaṃ

icchājñānakriyārohaṃ vinā naiva sad ucyate

tacchaktitritayārohād bhairavīye cidātmani

visṛjyate hi tat tasmād bahir vātha visṛjyate

evaṃ sadrūpataivaiṣāṃ satām śaktitrayātmatām
visargaṃ parabodhena samākṣipyaiva vartate
tat sad eva bahīrūpaṃ prāg bodhāgnivilāpitam
antarnadatparāmarśaśeṣībhūtaṃ tato 'pyalam
khātmatvam eva saṃprāptaṃ śaktitritayagocarāt
vedanātmakatām etya saṃhārātmani līyate
idaṃ saṃhārahṛdayaṃ prācyaṃ sṛṣṭau ca hṛnmatam
etadrūpaparāmarśamakṛtrimamanābilam
ahamityāhureṣaiva prakaśāsya prakāśatā
etad vīryaṃ hi sarveṣām mantrāṇāṃ hṛdayātmakam
vinānena jaḍāste syur jīva iva vinā hṛdā.

38. See on the *mantra KhPhREṂ* Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 4.189b-190b, 5.146, 33.45-46 and Jayaratha's comment to these passages. Also *MVT* 8.39-43. See also the apparent discrepancy between Gnoli's and Padoux's reconstruction of this second Heart-*mantra*. Refer for this to Padoux, *Recherches*, pp. 356-358 and Gnoli, LDSS, p. 176. The quite different reconstructions of the *mantra* result from the identification of the second phoneme of the *mantra* by Gnoli as being *Ph*, while Padoux identifies it as *Kṣ*, on the basis of the comment to *TĀ* 5.149-150, where *saṃhāra* is equated with *Kṣ*. This identification of the phoneme results in the *mantra RKṣKhEṂ*.

39. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 5.60b-62:

ekīkṛtamahāmūlaśūlavaisargike hṛdi
parasminneti viśrāntiṃ sarvāpūraṇayogataḥ
atra tatpūrṇavṛttyaiva viśvāveśamayaṃ sthitam
prakāśasyātmaviśrāntāvaham ityeva dṛśyatām
anuttaravimarśe prāgvyāpārādivivarjite.

40. Ibid. 5.142-151:

sukhasītkārasatsamyaksāmyaprathamasaṃvidaḥ
saṃvedanaṃ hi prathamaṃ sparśo 'nuttarasaṃvidaḥ
hṛtkaṇṭhyoṣṭhyatridhāmāntarnitarāṃ pravikāsini
caturdaśaḥ praveśo ya ekīkṛtatadātmakaḥ
tato visargoccārāṃśe hrādaśāntapathāvubhau
hṛdayena sahaikadhyaṃ nayate japatatparaḥ
kandahṛtkaṇṭhatālvagrakauṇḍilīprakriyāntataḥ
ānandamadhyanāḍyantaḥ spandanaṃ bījamāvahet

saṃhārabījaṃ khaṃ hṛtsthamoṣṭhyaṃ phullaṃ svamūrdhani
tejastryaśraṃ tālukaṇṭhe bindurūrdhvapade sthitaḥ
ityenayā budho yuktyā varṇajapyaparāyaṇaḥ
anuttaraṃ paraṃ dhāma praviśedacirāt sudhīḥ
varṇaśabdena nīlādi yadvā dīkṣottare yathā
saṃhāranragnimaruto rudrabinduyutānsmaret
hṛdaye tanmayo lakṣyaṃ paśyetsaptadinādatha
visphuliṅgāgnivannīlapītaraktādicitritam
jājvalīti hṛdambhoje bījadīpaprabodhitam
dīpavajjvalito bindurbhāsate vighanārkavat
svayaṃ bhāsātmanānena tādātmyaṃ yātyananyadhīḥ
śivena hematāṃ yadvattāmraṃ sūtena vedhitam.

9. Conclusion: The Heart Attained

1. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 26.60b-61a. For the Sanskrit to this verse see note 23 below.

2. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 2a, p. 3:

satyaṃ sphurati, sphuritam api tu tattvato na hṛdayaṅgamībhūtam. hṛdayaṅgamībhāvena ca vinā bhātam apyabhātam eva rathyāgamane tṛṇaparṇādivat. hṛdayaṅgamatāvagamanasādhyā hi tu tṛptir jīvanmuktatā, tat samāveśasādhyā hi tṛptir vibhūtirūpeti dvividhā tṛptiḥ parāmarśena vinā na bhavatīti yukta eva praśnaḥ.

hṛdayaṅgamībhūtam and *hṛdayaṅgamībhāvena*. The analysis of this compound may perhaps be understood as follows. It seems to be a *gatisamāsa* built on an *aluksamāsa*. It seems that *hṛdaya* is here in the neuter accusative singular. Its final *m* becomes the guttural nasal before mute of the same class in internal combination (W212). The root *gam* often governs the accusative (W274a), and moreover, words ending in the suffix *-in* often take the accusative (W271b). I see the formation as *hṛdayam* + *gama* (a *tatpuruṣa* on analogy with *vedavid*) yielding *hṛdayaṅgama* to which is then added the *bhūta* member (W1273c) to turn the whole thing into an adjective. In the process of forming the *gatisamāsa* the final *a* of *gama* is changed to *ī*. This is the *cvi*-suffix commonly found in the formation of *gati* compounds (e.g., *ekībhūta* from *eka* = *bhūta*). In checking the various occurrences of this term, I have found some small variation in the spelling. In the *aluksamāsa* one sometimes encounters the guttural nasal and other times the *anusvāra*. For example, I encountered, besides the above and its variants such as *hṛdayaṅgamībhāvena*, *hṛdayaṅgamatā*, *hṛdayaṅgamīkṛtaṃ*, the alternate spellings *hṛdayaṃgamīkartavyaḥ*, *hṛdayaṃgamībhāvaṃ*. The predominant spelling does seem to be with the guttural nasal, however. A term that seems to be related in meaning is *svīkaraṇa*, which I have rendered as "appropriation," but which literally means

"to make one's own." It occurs in the *PTlv* in various forms as follows: p. 22: *svīkṛta, svīkaroti;* p. 24: *svīkartavya;* p. 25: *svīkāra.*

3. For other occurrences and variations on this term see: Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 18: *hṛdayaṅgamībhāvena;* p. 90: *hṛdayaṅgamīkṛtam;* p. 139: *hṛdayaṃgamīkartavyaḥ;* p. 180: *hṛdayaṃgamīkṛtam;* p. 272-273: *hṛdayaṅgamatā.* Also see Abhinavagupta, *ĪPv*, vol. 1, p. 37: *hṛdayaṃgamībhāvam;* vol. 2, p. 276: *hṛdayaṅgamatā;* and Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on 5-9a, p. 8: *hṛdayaṅgamatayā.*

4. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 1, pp. 1-2. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 7, note 2, above.

5. Ibid., comment on verses 2b-3a, p. 2. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 5, note 13, above.

6. Ibid., comment on verse 10, p. 10. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 5, note 22, above.

7. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 17-18:

   prayojanaṃ ca sarvapramātṛṇāṃ vibhoḥ paraśaktipātānugrahaveśotpannaitāvad anuttarajñānabhājanabhāvānām itthaṃ nijasvarūpahṛdayaṅgamībhāvena nijāmodabharakrīḍābhāsitabhedasya nikhilabandhābhimatatattvavrātasya svātmacamatkārapūrṇāhantātādātmyabhairavasvarūpābhedasamāveśātmikā jīvata eva muktiḥ.

8. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 25, p. 19. For the Sanskrit for this passage see chap. 8, note 18, above.

9. Ibid., comment on verses 33-34, p. 24:

   samyagiti uktaprakāreṇa kṛtapūjāvidhiḥ, samyag iti ca uktavakṣyamāṇopadeśadiśā bījaṃ smaran parāmṛśan samyak prasiddhyati parabhairavadevatāvadanenaiva dehena samastavibhūtibhājanaṃ bhavati.

10. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, pp. 269-271:

   evam anavarataṃ vyavahāreṣvapi bījaṃ smaranneva smaraṇādeva kṛtapūjāvidhiḥ, prakarṣeṇānyakulaśāstrādiśaivavaiṣṇavāntaśāstrātirekeṇaiva bhagavadbhairavabhaṭṭārakarūpasamāviṣṭaḥ nijaparasaṃviccamatkāravaśanirmitabhāvakrīḍāḍambaro jīvanmukta eva prathamoktanayena bhavati ityanubhava evāyam āvartate na tvanyat kiṃciditi "smaraṇam" uktam. śrīmataśāstreṣvevam eva, upāsakastv ananupraviṣṭavīryasattāsārahṛdayo 'pi kramapūjāmāhātmyāt bījaṃ samyak smaran prāptahṛdayākhyatattvamantravīryaḥ prakarṣeṇa siddhyati - kramapūjāmāhātmyādeva tāratamyātiśayāt svayaṃ vā prasannagurubhaṭṭārakavadanakamalād vā mantravīryaṃ hṛdayātmakam āsādayati jīvanmuktaśca bhavatīti yāvat. atra dvāraparivārapūjanaṃ guṇaṃ khaṇḍanāṃ vā na vahati tata eva bhaṭṭapādaiḥ nyarūpi. atra tu kulaparvāṇi pavitraṃ ceti samyaktvaṃ pūjāvidheḥ:

   yatrāntarakhilaṃ bhāti yacca sarvatra bhāsate

   sphurattāiva hi sā hyekā hṛdayaṃ paramaṃ budhāḥ

rāsabhī vaḍavā vāpi svaṃ jagajjanmadhāma yat
samakālaṃ vikāsyaiva saṃkocya hṛdi hṛṣyati
tathobhayamahānandasauṣumnahṛdayāntare
spandamānam upāsīta hṛdayaṃ sṛṣṭilakṣaṇaṃ
dhyāyan smaram pravimṛśan kurvan vā yatra kutracit
viśrāntim eti yasmāc ca prollaseddhṛdayaṃ tu tat
tadekam eva yatraitajjñānaṃ vaikalpikaṃ param
tattvāni bhuvanābhogāḥ śivādipaśumātaraḥ
svaṃ svaṃ vicitraṃ vindantaḥ svarūpaṃ pāramārthikam
citrīkurvanty eva yānti tāṃ citrāṃ saṃvidaṃ parām.

11. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verse 33-34, p. 24:

tathā ayaṃ parāmarśaḥ svīkartavyaḥ, yathā vicchedaśūnyaḥ sakṛdvibhāta-svabhāvo'kālakalitaḥ saṃpadyate.

12. Ibid., comment on verses 35-36, p. 26:

praharacatuṣkavibhedena samāveśe tu sarvasmin neva prakāśamaye dina-rūpatāṃ gate māyāśarvari sañkoce kṣīṇe anenaiva dehena bhairavavat sarvajño bhavati.

13. Ibid., comment on verses 33-34, p. 25:

tad etat catuṣkam ābhimukhyena svasaṃvidrūpahṛdayaviśrāntaṃ sat buddhi-prāṇadehabhūmiparyantasvīkārātmanā samāveśaparyantaṃ kṣipet tadrūpa-parāmarśapradhānaṃ vigalitajaḍabhāvaṃ tadavaṣṭambaikasāraṃ buddhi-prāṇadehendriyādikaṃ samastaṃ kulaṃ tatraiva tadrūpaprakāśanavikāsa-vaśāt prakāśakulatām āyāntaṃ kuryād iti visargacatuṣkasamāveśo'nena darśitaḥ.

14. Ibid., verses 11-16, and comment, p. 11:

asyoccāre kṛte samyañ mantramudrāgaṇo mahān
sadyaḥ sanmukhatām eti svadehāveśalakṣaṇaṃ.
muhūrtaṃ smarate yas tu cumbake nābhimudritaḥ
saṃbadhnāti sadā dehe mantramudrāgaṇaṃ naraḥ.
atītānāgatānarthān pṛṣṭo'sau kathayaty api
praharād yadabhipretaṃ devatārūpam uccaran.
sākṣāt paśyaty asandigdham ākṛṣṭaṃ rudraśaktibhiḥ
praharadvayamātreṇa vyomastho jāyate smaran.
trayeṇa mātaraḥ sarvā yogeśvaryo mahābalāḥ
vīrā vīreśvarāḥ siddhā balavān śākinīgaṇaḥ.
āgatya samayaṃ dattvā bhairaveṇa pracoditāḥ
yacchanti paramāṃ siddhiṃ phalaṃ yad vā samīhitam.

etatsaṃvittattvaṃ hṛdayatāṃ cet pratipannaṃ tadā jīvanmuktateti uktam. yadā tu tad eva prāṇabuddhibhūmiṣu siddharasavidhyamānadhātunyāyena samāveśakrameṇaitad hṛdayātmakaparāmarśapātratāpādanayā prāṇabuddhyādijaḍimanyakkāriṇyā prasarad rūpam abhyāsadaśāṃ saṃpādyate.

15. Ibid., pp. 11-12:

tadāsya svavimarśāveśābhyasād eva nāḍīprāṇajayādiśāstrāntarīyayoganirapekṣā eva aparā api siddhayo vibhūtirūpāḥ kaulikasya siddhayo jāyante iti tātparyam. asya bījasyoccāre prāṇarūpatāyāṃ samāveśena tāvat kṛtamātra eva jñānakriyāśaktiśarīrā mantramudrāḥ sadya eva tanmukhatām uccārayitur ābhimukhyaṃ pratipadyante. katham. svadehāveśalakṣaṇaṃ kṛtvā. tena hi prāṇena svadeho'py āviśyate. tataśca saṃpūrṇajñānakriyātmakahṛdayarūpatāntarlīnīkṛteṇa prāṇeṇādhiṣṭhito deho'pi tadhṛdayarūpatāsamāviṣṭo jñānakriyātmakābhir mantramudrābhir āviśyate. tad ayam tāvad upakramo vibhūtīnāṃ tāsām mantramudrāyattatvāditi.

16. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ*, chap. 32.

17. Abhinavagupta, *PTlv*, comment on verses 11-16, p. 12:

atha tathāveśam nirantaraṃ yadi ghaṭikādvayam abhyasyati cumbake vaktre bāhyasamastasadrūpabhāvarāśiniṣṭhacumbanātmakanigiraṇapravṛtte kākacañcupuṭākāre sadvṛttirūpasomasvabhāvaparamaśītalarasāsvādakāriṇi sati nābhimudritaṃ nābhisthānāvadhiṃ kṛtvā pūrṇakumbhakasamāveśābhyāsena, tadā mantramudrāsamūhaḥ dehe vāgrūpe kāyarūpe ca paravaśasyaivābhivyajyate buddhirūpe pratyagātmani prakāśate, jñānakriyāveśād yathā praśne kṛte jhaṭiti pratibhāsate, atītānāgatavartamānaṃ tat sarvam avitatham eva bhavati.

18. Ibid., p. 12:

tathābhūte ca sāmānyākāramantramudrāveśābhyāse dṛḍhībhūte tam evābhyāsaṃ nirantaraṃ madhye vicchedaśūnyam ekarasaṃ sakṛdvibhātaṃ praharaparyantatā yadi nayati, yām kāmcin mantradevatāṃ mudrādevatāṃ vā hṛdaye saṃdhīyate, tadā tām eva rudraśaktibhir nirantarasamāveśāvaṣṭambhanavīryarūpābhir ākṛṣṭām ānītāṃ sākṣādrūpeṇa svaśarīratādātmyena pratipannām ākṛtitaḥ paśyati.

19. Ibid., pp. 12-13:

tathā svīkāre'pi pravṛtte yadi samāveśaṃ na tyajati tadā praharadvayaṃ nirantaraṃ samāviṣṭo dehaprāṇādikaṃ svakaṃ na kiṃcit paśyati nirāvaraṇaṃ cidrupaghanam eva sakalam avalokayati. tathā etasmin sarvadā yāvad atiparikṣīṇe dehenānyaśarīrakalpena svena avacchede.

20. Ibid., p. 13:

punar api yadā samāveśābhyāsaṃ na parityajati, yadā praharatrayaṃ nirantaraṃ sakṛdvicchedavandhyasvarūpasamāveśaśālī tiṣṭhati, tadā mātaro brāhmyādikāḥ, yogeśvaryaś ca taccakrābhyāsasiddhāḥ vīrāś ca aghorādyaḥ, vīreśvarāḥ navātmadevatā prabhṛtayaḥ samunmīlayanti. taccakrābhyāsajāta-

vibhūtayaśca siddhā jāyante. ete mahatā bhairavabalena yuktāḥ. yaś ca śāṃkinīnām śaktīnāṃ khecaryādibhedabhinnānāṃ saṃbandhī guṇo vargaḥ bhairavabalena balavān. ete sarve paramāṃ siddhiṃ dharaṇyādiśivāntādhvaviṣayāṃ anenaiva dehena svatantratām dadati. yataḥ ete sarve mātṛprabhṛtayo devatāviśeṣāḥ: "samayaṃ dattveti" maryādāpūrvakaṃ bhairaveṇa bhagavatā svarūpāvibhedena svarūpāvābhāsanena bhairavacarānujīvitatvena prakarṣeṇa coditāh. sa hy etaddevatā cakreśvaras tadāviṣṭaprāṇādiśca bhairavabhūta eva, atas tad anugāminyo bhavanti. taduktaṃ "āgatyeti".

21. Ibid., p. 13:

viśiṣṭaṃ kiñcidekatamaṃ uttamamadhyamādhamaphalarāśimadhyāt khaḍgagorocanoddiṣṭapātālādiphalaṃ hṛdaye 'bhisaṃhitaṃ bhavati, tadā tad api prayacchanti.

22. Abhinavagupta, *MVv* 2.95-103, p. 113:

vaktramīṣad yadā yogī vikāsayati saṃvidaḥ
sarvā indriyanāḍyantaścakrākramaṇasaṃśrayāḥ
tadā vikāsaṃ grāhyārthabhedābhāvamayaṃ haṭhāt
prayānti cidunmukhatvān nīlapītādibhedavān
grāhyagrāhakasaṃbandhabhedaḥ sampadi bhidyate
yoginīvaktrasaṃrūḍhasaṃpradāyakramāptayā
sadyo 'nubhavadāyinyā mudrayā mudritākhilaḥ
sarvādhiṣṭhātṛcidrūpasākṣādbhairavatandritaḥ
sa yogī vismayāviṣṭo labhate svātmasaṃvidam
tattaddṛśyodayāpāya yoge 'pyanapayatsthiti
taḍāgavartinimagnāmbu tannānyatra pravartate
prayatnenāpi tanmātrapūraṇāya yadakṣamam.
yadā tvantaḥpadadvārasāra (tadvāridhārā) saṃpūritaṃ rasāt
bhavedbhaveyustatpūrṇāḥ pravāhāḥ sarvatomukhāḥ.
evaṃ svollāsarabhasāccaitanyaṃ pronmiṣatsvayam
avibhāgena bhāvāṃśān svātmābhedena bhāsayan.
mīlanāviṣayībhāvaṃ śrayed yadi muhūrtakam
māyāvigalanādbhūmirbhairavīyā virājate.

23. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 26.58-65:

deśakālānusandhānaguṇadravyakriyādibhiḥ
svalpā kriyā bhūyasī vā hṛdayādhlādadāyibhiḥ
bāhyaiḥ saṃkalpajairvāpi kārakaiḥ parikalpitā
mumukṣorna viśeṣāya naiḥśreyasavidhiṃ prati
nahi brahmaṇi śaṃsanti bāhulyālpatvadurdaśāḥ

citaḥ svātantryasāratvāt tasyānandaghanatvataḥ
kriyā syāttanmayībhūtyai hṛdayādhlādadāyibhiḥ
śivābhedabharād bhāvavargaḥ ścyotati yaṃ rasam
tameva parame dhāmni pūjanāyārpayedbudhaḥ
stotreṣu bahudhā caitanmayā proktaṃ nijāhṇike
adhiśayya pāramārthikabhāvaprasaraprakāśamullasati
yā paramāmṛtadṛk tvāṃ tayārcayante rahasyavidaḥ
kṛtvādhāradharāṃ camatkṛtirasaprokṣākṣaṇakṣālitā-
māttairmānasataḥ svabhāvakusumaiḥ svāmodasandohibhiḥ
ānandāmṛtanirbharasvahṛdayānarghārghapātrakramāt
tvāṃ devyā saha dehadevasadane devārcaye 'harniśam
nānāsvādrasāmimāṃ trijagatīṃ hṛccakrayantrārpitām
ūrdhvādhyastavivekagauravabharānniṣpīḍya niḥṣyanditam
yatsaṃvitparamāmṛtaṃ mṛtijarājanmāpahaṃ jṛmbhate tena tvāṃ
haviṣā pareṇa parame saṃtarpaye 'harniśam.

24. Abhinavagupta, *PTv*, p. 269.

25. Abhinavagupta, *TĀ* 3.259b-264:

upādhyatītaṃ yadrūpaṃ tad dvidhā guravo jaguḥ
anullāsādupādhīnāṃ yadvā praśamayogataḥ
praśamaśca dvidhā śāntyā haṭhapākakrameṇa tu
alaṃgrāsarasākhyena satataṃ jvalanātmanā
haṭhapākapraśamanaṃ yattṛtīyaṃ tadeva ca
upadeśāya yujyeta bhedendhanavidāhakam
nijabodhajaṭharahutabhuji bhāvāḥ sarve samarpitā haṭhataḥ
vijahati bhedavibhāgaṃ nijaśaktyā taṃ samindhānāḥ
haṭhapākena bhāvānāṃ rūpe bhinne vilāpite
aśnantyamṛtasādbhūtaṃ viśvaṃ saṃvittidevatāḥ
tāstṛptāḥ svātmanaḥ pūrṇaṃ hṛdayaikāntaśāyinam
cidvyomabhairavaṃ devamabhedenādhiśerate
evaṃ kṛtyakriyāveśānnāmopāsābahutvataḥ
āsāṃ bahuvidhaṃ rūpamabhede 'pyavabhāsate
āsāmeva ca devīnām āvāpodvāpayogataḥ
ekadvitricatuṣpañcaṣaṭsaptāṣṭanavottaraiḥ
rudrārkānyakalāsenāprabhṛtirbhedavistaraḥ.

26. Ibid. 4.194-202, 209-212:

akṛtrimaitam etaddhṛdayārūḍho yat kiṃcidācaret
prāṇyādvā mṛśate vāpi sa sarvo'sya japo mataḥ
yad eva svecchayā sṛṣṭisvābhāvyād bahirantarā
nirmīyate tadevāsya dhyānaṃ syāt pāramārthikam
nirākāre hi ciddhamni viśvākṛtimaye sati
phalārthināṃ kācid eva dhyayatvenākrtiḥ sthitā
yathā hyabhedāt pūrṇe 'pi bhāve jalam upāharan
anyākṛtyapahānena ghaṭam arthayate rasāt
tathaiva parameśānaniyati pravijṛmbhaṇāt
kācidevākṛtiḥ kāṃcit sūte phalavikalpanām
yas tu saṃpūrṇahṛdayo na phalaṃ nāma vāñchati
tasya viśvākṛtirdevī sā cāvacchedavarjanāt
kule yogina udriktabhairavīyaparāsavāt
ghūrṇitasya sthitir dehe mudrā yākācid eva sā
antarindhanasaṃbhāramanapekṣyaiva nityaśah
jājvalītyakhilākṣaughaprasṛtograśikhaḥ śikhī
bodhāgnau tādṛśe bhāvā viśantastasya sanmahaḥ
udrecayanto gacchanti homakarmanimittatām
tanmayībhavanaṃ nāma prāptiḥ sānuttarātmani
pūrṇatvasya parā kāṣṭhā setyatra na phalāntaram
phalaṃ sarvam apūrṇatve tatra tatra prakalpitam
akalpite hi pūrṇatve phalam anyat kim ucyatām
eṣa yāgavidhiḥ ko 'pi kasyāpi hṛdi vartate
yasya prasīdecciccakraṃ drāgapaścimajanmanaḥ
atra yāge gato rūḍhiṃ kaivalyam adhigacchati
lokair ālokyamāno hi dehabandhavidhau sthitaḥ.

27. Ibid. 5.27b-53:

etad anuttaraṃ cakraṃ hṛdayāccakṣurādibhiḥ
vyomabhir niḥsaratyeva tattadviṣayagocare
taccakrabhābhis tatrārthe sṛṣṭisthitilayakramāt
somasūryāgnibhāsātma rūpaṃ samavatiṣṭhate
evaṃ śabdādiviṣaye śrotrādivyomavartamanā
cakreṇānena patatā tādātmyaṃ paribhāvayet

anena kramayogena yatra yatra pataty adaḥ
cakraṃ sarvātmakaṃ tatat sārvabhaumamahīśavat
itthaṃ viśvādhvapaṭalamayatnenaiva līyate
bhairavīyamahācakre saṃvittiparivārite
tataḥ saṃskāramātreṇa viśvasyāpi parikṣaye
svātmocchalattayā bhrāmyaccakraṃ saṃcintayen mahat
tatas taddāhyavilayāt tatsaṃskāraparikṣayāt
praśāmyad bhāvayeccakraṃ tataḥ śāntaṃ tataḥ śamam
anena dhyānayogena viśvaṃ cakre vilīyate
tatsaṃvidi tataḥ saṃvidvilīnārthaiva bhāsate
citsvābhāvyāt tato bhūyaḥ sṛṣṭir yac cin maheśvarī
evaṃ pratikṣaṇaṃ viśvaṃ svasaṃvidi vilāpayat
visṛjaṃśca tato bhūyaḥ śaśvad bhairavatām vrajet
evaṃ triśūlāt prabhṛti catuṣpañcārakakramāt
pañcāśadaraparyantaṃ cakraṃ yogī vibhāvayet
catuṣṣaṣṭiśatāraṃ vā sahasrāram athāpi vā
asaṃkhyārasahasraṃ vā cakraṃ dhyāyed ananyadhīḥ
saṃvinnāthasya mahato devasyollāsisaṃvidaḥ
naivāsti kācit kalanā viśvaśakter maheśituḥ
śaktayo 'sya jagat kṛtsnaṃ śaktimāṃstu maheśvaraḥ
iti māṅgalaśāstre tu śrīśrīkaṇṭho nyarūpayat
ityetat prathamopāyarūpaṃ dhyānaṃ nyarūpayat
śrīśaṃbhunātho me tuṣṭas tasmai śrīsumati prabhuḥ
anayaiva diśānyāni dhyānānyapi samāśrayet
anuttaropāyadhūrāṃ yānyāyānti kramaṃ vinā
atha prāṇasya yā vṛttiḥ praṇanādyā nirūpitā
tadupāyatayā brūmo 'nuttarapravikāsanam
nijānande pramātraṃśamātre hṛdi purā sthitaḥ
śūnyatāmātraviśrānter nirānandaṃ vibhāvayet
prāṇodaye prameye tu parānandaṃ vibhāvayet
tatrānantaprameyāṃśapūraṇāpānanirvṛtaḥ
parānandagatas tiṣṭhed apānaśaśiśobhitaḥ
tato 'nantasphuranmeyasaṃghaṭṭaikāntanirvṛtaḥ
samānabhūmim āgatya brahmānandamayo bhavet

tato'pi mānameyaughakalanāgrāsatatparaḥ
udānavahnau viśrānto mahānandaṃ vibhāvayat
tatra viśrāntim abhyetya śāmyaty asmin mahārciṣi
nirupādhir mahāvyāptir vyānākhyā upādhivarjitā
tadā khalu cidānando yo jaḍānupabṛṃhitaḥ
nahyatra saṃsthitiḥ kāpi vibhaktā jaḍarūpiṇaḥ
yatra ko'pi vyavacchedo nāsti yad viśvataḥ sphurat
yadanāhata saṃvitti paramāmṛtabṛṃhitam
yatrāsti bhāvanādīnāṃ na mukhyā kāpi saṃgatiḥ
tadeva jagadānandam asmabhyaṃ śambhur ūcivān
tatra viśrāntir ādheyā hṛdayoccārayogataḥ
yā tatra samyagviśrāntiḥ sānuttaramayīsthitiḥ
ityetaddhṛdayādyekasvabhāve 'pi svadhāmani.

28. Ibid. 5.70-73:

ānandanāḍīyugalaspandanāvahitau sthitaḥ
enāṃ visarganiḥṣyandasaudhabhūmiṃ prapadyate
śākte kṣobhe kulāveśe sarvanāḍyagragocare
vyāptau sarvātmasaṃkoce hṛdayaṃ praviśet sudhīḥ
somasūryakalājālaparasparanigharṣataḥ
agnīṣomātmake dhāmni visargānanda unmiṣet
alaṃ rahasya kathayā guptam etat svabhāvataḥ
yoginīhṛdayaṃ tatra viśrāntaḥ syātkṛtī budhaḥ.

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THE TRIADIC HEART OF ŚIVA:

Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-dual Shaivism of Kashmir

PAUL EDUARDO MULLER-ORTEGA

This book explores one of the most explicit and sophisticated theoretical formulations of tantric yoga. It explains Abhinavagupta's teaching about the nature of ultimate reality, about the methods for experiencing this ultimate reality, and about the nature of the state of realization, a condition of embodied enlightenment. The author uncovers the conceptual matrix surrounding the practices of the Kaula lineage of Kashmir Shaivism.

The primary textual basis for the book is provided by Abhinavagupta's *Parātrīśikā-laghuvṛtti*, a short meditation manual that centers on the symbolism of the Heart-*mantra*, SAUH.

"Muller-Ortega's approach is good, clear, intelligent, and perceptive. The translation of the *Pārātrīśikā-laghuvṛtti* given in the appendix, being the first English translation of this short but important text, is a very useful contribution to the study of Kashmir Shaivism, and so are the long and numerous quotations in the text of other works, as yet untranslated into English, of Abhinavagupta."—André Padoux, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris

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